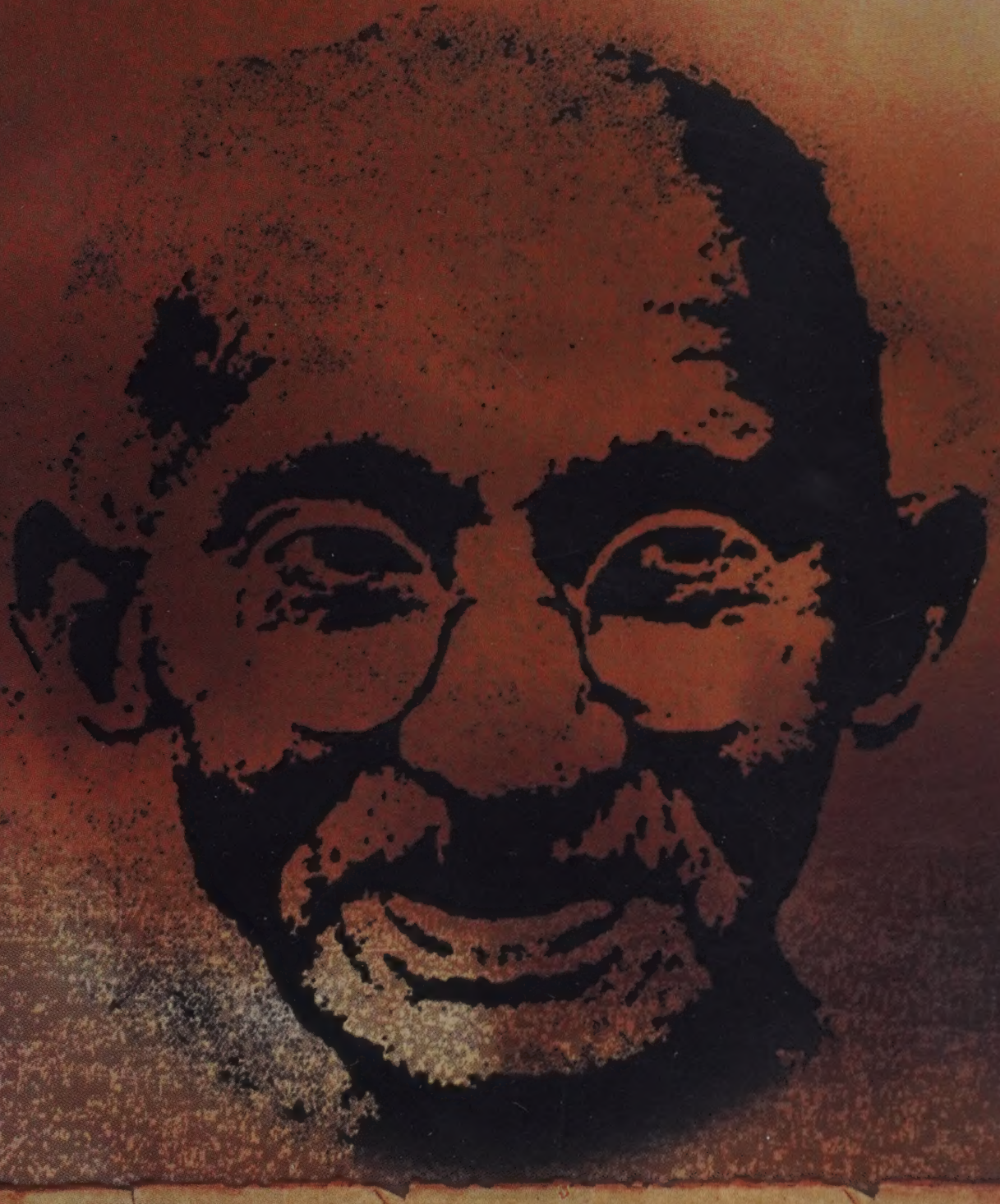


GREAT WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI



THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS
WITH TRUTH

FREEDOMS BATTLE

HIND SWARAJ

**Great Works
of
Mahatma Gandhi**

London India
New York

Great Works of Mahatma Gandhi

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New Delhi

*Great Works
of
Mahatma Gandhi*

**GREAT WORKS OF
MAHATAMA GANDHI**

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Book—1

INTRODUCTION

Four or five years ago, at the instance of some of my nearest co-workers, I agreed to write my autobiography. I made the start, but scarcely had I turned over the first sheet when riots broke out in Bombay and the work remained at a standstill. Then followed a series of events which culminated in my imprisonment at Yeravda. Sjt. Jeramdas, who was one of my fellow-prisoners there, asked me to put everything else on one side and finish writing the autobiography. I replied that I had already framed a programme of study for myself, and that I could not think of doing anything else until this course was complete. I should indeed have finished the autobiography had I gone through my full term of imprisonment at Yeravda, for there was still a year left to complete the task, when I was discharged. Swami Anand has now repeated the proposal, and as I have finished the history of Satyagraha in South Africa, I am tempted to undertake the autobiography for *Navajivan*. The Swami wanted me to write it separately for publication as a book. But I have no spare time. I could only write a chapter week by week. Something has to be written for *Navajivan* every week. Why should it not be the autobiography? The Swami agreed to the proposal, and here am I hard at work.

But a God-fearing friend had his doubts, which he shared with me on my day of silence. 'What has set you on this adventure?' he asked. 'Writing an autobiography is a practice peculiar to the west. I know of nobody in the East having written one, except amongst those who have come under Western influence. And what will you write? Supposing you reject tomorrow the things you hold as principles today, or supposing you revise in the future your plans of today, is it not likely that the men who shape their conduct on the authority of your word, spoken or written, may be misled. Don't you think it would be better not to write anything like an autobiography, at any rate just yet?'

This argument had some effect on me. But it is not my purpose to attempt a real autobiography. I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth, and as my life consists of nothing but those

experiments, it is true that the story will take the shape of an autobiography. But I shall not mind, if every page of it speaks only of my experiments. I believe, or at any rate flatter myself with the belief, that a connected account of all these experiments will not be without benefit to the reader. My experiments in the political field are now known, not only in India, but to a certain extent to the 'civilized' world. For me, they have not much value; and the title of Mahatma that they have won for me has, therefore, even less. Often the title has deeply pained me; and there is not a moment I can recall when it may be said to have tickled me. But I should certainly like to narrate my experiments in the spiritual field which are known only to myself, and from which I have derived such power as I possess for working in the political field. If the experiments are really spiritual, then there can be no room for self-praise. They can only add to my humility. The more I reflect and look back on the past, the more vividly do I feel my limitations.

What I want to achieve,—what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years—is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain *Moksha*.¹ I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to this same end. But as I have all along believed that what is possible for one is possible for all, my experiments have not been conducted in the closet, but in the open; and I do not think that this fact detracts from their spiritual value. There are some things which are known only to oneself and one's Maker. These are clearly incommunicable. The experiments I am about to relate are not such. But they are spiritual or rather moral; for the essence of religion is morality.

Only those matters of religion that can be comprehended as much by children as by older people, will be included in this story. If I can narrate them in a dispassionate and humble spirit, many other experimenters will find in them provision for their onward march. Far be it from me to claim any degree of perfection for these experiments. I claim for them nothing more than does a scientist who, though he conducts his experiments with the utmost accuracy, forethought and minuteness, never claims any finality about his conclusions, but keeps an open mind regarding them. I have gone through deep self-introspection, searched myself through and through, and examined and analysed every psychological situation. Yet I am far from claiming any finality or infallibility about my conclusions. One claim I do indeed make and it is this. For me they appear to be

1. Literally freedom from birth and death. The nearest English Translation is salvation.

absolutely correct, and seem for the time being to be final. For if they were not, I should base no action on them. But at every step I have carried out the process of acceptance or rejection and acted accordingly. And so long as my acts satisfy my reason and my heart, I must firmly adhere to my original conclusions.

If I had only to discuss academic principles. I should clearly not attempt an autobiography. But my purpose being to give an account of various practical applications of these principles, I have given the chapters I propose to write the title of *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. These will ofcourse include experiments with non-violence, celibacy and other principles of conduct believed to be distinct from truth. But for me, truth is the sovereign principle, which includes numerous other principles. This truth is not only truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also, and not only the relative truth of our conception, but the Absolute Truth, the Eternal Principle, that is God. There are innumerable definitions of God, because His manifestations are innumerable. They overwhelm me with wonder and awe and for a moment stun me. But I worship God as Truth only. I have not yet found Him, but I am seeking after Him. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest. Even if the sacrifice demanded be my very life, I hope I may be prepared to give it. But as long as I have not realized this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold by the relative truth as I have conceived it. That relative truth must, meanwhile, be my beacon, my shield and buckler. Though this path is strait and narrow and sharp as the razor's edge, for me it has been the quickest and easiest. Even my Himalayan blunders have seemed trifling to me because I have kept strictly to this path. For the path has saved me from coming to grief, and I have gone forward according to my light. Often in my progress I have had faint glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal. Let those who wish, realize how the conviction has grown upon me; let them share my experiments and share also my conviction if they can. The further conviction has been growing upon me that whatever is possible for me is possible even for a child, and I have sound reasons for saying so. The instruments for the quest of truth are as simple as they are difficult. They may appear quite impossible to an arrogant person, and quite possible to an innocent child. The seeker after truth should be humbler than the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after truth should so humble himself that even the dust could crush him. Only then, and not till then, will he have a glimpse of truth. The dialogue between Vasishtha and Vishvamitra

makes this abundantly clear. Christianity and Islam also amply bear it out.

If anything that I write in these pages should strike the reader as being touched with pride, then he must take it that there is something wrong with my quest, and that my glimpses are no more than a mirage. Let hundreds like me perish, but let truth prevail. Let us not reduce the standards of truth even by a hair's breadth for judging erring mortals like myself.

I hope and pray that no one will regard the advice interspersed in the following chapters as authoritative. The experiments narrated should be regarded as illustrations, in the light of which everyone may carry on his own experiments according to his own inclination and capacity. I trust that to this limited extent the illustrations will be really helpful; because I am not going either to conceal or understate any ugly things that must be told. I hope to acquaint the reader fully with all my faults and errors. My purpose is to describe experiments in the science of Satyagraha, not to say how good I am. In judging myself I shall try to be as harsh as truth, as I want others also to be. Measuring myself by that standard I must exclaim with Surdas :

Where is there a wretch
So wicked and loathsome as I?
I have forsaken my Maker,
So faithless have I been.

For it is an unbroken torture to me that I am still so far from Him, who, as I fully know, governs every breath of my life, and whose offspring I am. I know that it is the evil passions within that keep me so far from Him, and yet I cannot get away from them.

But I must close. I can only take up the actual story in the next chapter.

M. K. GANDHI

The Ashram, Sabarmati.
26th November, 1925

PART ONE

1. BIRTH AND PARENTAGE

The Gandhis belong to the Bania caste and seem to have been originally grocers. But for three generations, from my grandfather, they have been Prime Ministers in several Kathiawad States. Uttamchand Gandhi, alias Ota Gandhi, my grandfather, must have been a man of principle. State intrigues compelled him to leave Porbandar, where he was Diwan, and to seek refuge in Junagadh. There he saluted the Nawab with the left hand. Someone, noticing the apparent discourtesy, asked for an explanation, which was thus given: 'The right hand is already pledged to Porbandar.'

Ota Gandhi married a second time, having lost his first wife. He had four sons by his first wife and two by his second wife. I do not think that in my childhood I ever felt or knew that these sons of Ota Gandhi were not all of the same mother. The fifth of these six brothers was Karamchand Gandhi, alias Kaba Gandhi, and the sixth was Tulsidas Gandhi. Both these brothers were Prime Ministers in Porbandar, one after the other. Kaba Gandhi was my father. He was a member of the Rajasthanik Court. It is now extinct, but in those days it was a very influential body for settling disputes between the chiefs and their fellow clansmen. He was for some time Prime Minister in Rajkot and then in Vankaner. He was a pensioner of the Rajkot State when he died.

Kaba Gandhi married four times in succession, having lost his wife each time by death. He had two daughters by his first and second marriages. His last wife, Putlibai, bore him a daughter and three sons, I being the youngest.

My father was a lover of his clan, truthful, brave and generous, but short-tempered. To a certain extent he might have been even given to carnal pleasures. For he married for the fourth time when he was over

forty. But he was incorruptible, and had earned a name for strict impartiality in his family as well as outside. His loyalty to the state was well known. An Assistant Political Agent spoke insultingly of the Rajkot Thakore Saheb, his chief, and he stood up to the insult. The Agent was angry and asked Kaba Gandhi to apologize. This he refused to do and was therefore kept under detention for a few hours. But when the Agent saw that Kaba Gandhi was adamant, he ordered him to be released.

My father never had any ambition to accumulate riches, and left us very little property.

He had no education, save that of experience. At best, he might be said to have read up to the fifth Gujarati standard. Of history and geography he was innocent. But his rich experience of practical affairs stood him in good stead in the solution of the most intricate questions and in managing hundreds of men. Of religious training he had very little, but he had that kind of religious culture which frequent visits to temples and listening to religious discourses make available to many Hindus. In his last days he began reading the *Gita* at the instance of a learned Brahman friend of the family, and he used to repeat aloud some verses every day at the time of worship.

The outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness. She was deeply religious. She would not think of taking her meals without her daily prayers. Going to *Haveli*—the Vaishnava temple—was one of her daily duties. As far as my memory can go back, I do not remember her having ever missed the *Chaturmas*.¹ She would take the hardest vows and keep them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them. I can recall her once falling ill when she was observing the *Chandrayana*² vow, but the illness was not allowed to interrupt the observance. To keep two or three consecutive fasts was nothing to her. Living on one meal a day during *Chaturmas* was a habit with her. Not content with that, she fasted every alternate day during one *Chaturmas*. During another *Chaturmas* she vowed not to have food without seeing the sun. We children on those days would stand, staring at the sky, waiting to announce the appearance of the sun to our mother. Everyone knows that at the height of the rainy season the sun often does not condescend to show his face. And I remember days when, at his sudden appearance, we would rush and announce it to her. She would run out to

-
1. Literally a period of four months. A vow of fasting and semi-fasting during the four months of the rains. The period is a sort of long Lent.
 2. A sort of fast in which the daily quantity of food is increased or diminished according as the moon waxes or wanes.

see with her own eyes, but by that time the fugitive sun would be gone, thus depriving her of her meal. 'That does not matter,' she would say cheerfully, 'God did not want me to eat today.' And then she would return to her round of duties.

My mother had strong commonsense. She was well informed about all matters of state, and ladies of the court thought highly of her intelligence. Often I would accompany her, exercising the privilege of childhood, and I still remember many lively discussions she had with the widowed mother of the Thakore Saheb.

Of these parents I was born at Porbandar, otherwise known as Sundamapuri, on the 2nd October, 1869. I passed my childhood in Porbandar. I recollect having been put to school. It was with some difficulty that I got through the multiplication tables. The fact that I recollect nothing more of those days than having learnt, in company with other boys, to call our teacher all kinds of names, would strongly suggest that my intellect must have been sluggish, and my memory raw.

2. CHILDHOOD

I must have been about seven when my father left Porbandar for Rajkot, to become a member of the Rajasthanik Court. There I was put into a primary school, and I can well recollect those days, including the names and other particulars of the teachers who taught me. As at Porbandar, so here, there is hardly anything to note about my studies. I could have been only a mediocre student. From this school I went to the suburban school and thence to the high school, having already reached my twelfth year. I do not remember having ever told a lie, during this short period, either to my teachers or to my schoolmates. I used to be very shy and avoided all company. My books and my lessons were my sole companions. To be at school at that stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as school closed—that was my daily habit. I literally ran back, because I could not bear to talk to anybody. I was even afraid lest anyone should poke fun at me.

There is an incident which occurred at the examination during my first year at the high school, and which is worth recording. Mr. Giles, the Educational Inspector, had come on a visit of inspection. He had set us five words to write as a spelling exercise. One of the words was 'kettle'. I had mis-spelt it. The teacher tried to prompt me with the point of his boot, but I would not be prompted. It was beyond me to see that he wanted

me to copy the spelling from my neighbour's slate, for I had thought that the teacher was there to supervise us against copying. The result that all the boys except myself were found to have spelt every word correctly. Only I had been stupid. The teacher tried later to bring this stupidity home to me, but without effect. I never could learn the art of 'copying'.

Yet the incident did not in the least diminish my respect for my teacher. I was, by nature, blind to the faults of elders. Later I came to know many other failings of this teacher, but my regard for him remained the same. For I had learnt to carry out the orders of elders, not to scan their actions.

Two other incidents belonging to the same period have always clung to my memory. As a rule I had a distaste for any reading beyond my school books. The daily lessons had to be done, because I disliked being taken to task by my teacher as much as I disliked deceiving him. Therefore I would do the lessons, but often without my mind in them. Thus when even the lessons could not be done properly, there was of course no question of any extra reading. But somehow my eyes fell on a book purchased by my father. It was *Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka* (a play about Shravana's devotion to his parents). I read it with intense interest. There came to our place about the same time itinerant showmen. One of the pictures I was shown was of Shravana carrying, by means of slings fitted for his shoulders, his blind parents on a pilgrimage. The book and the picture left an indelible impression on my mind. 'Here is an example for you to copy,' I said to myself. The agonized lament of the parents over Shravana's death is still fresh in my memory. The melting tune moved me deeply, and I played it on a concertina which my father had purchased for me.

There was a similar incident connected with another play. Just about this time, I had secured my father's permission to see a play performed by a certain dramatic company. This play--*Harishchandra*—captured my heart. I could never be tired of seeing it. But how often should I be permitted to go? It haunted me and I must have acted *Harishchandra* to myself times without number. 'Why should not all be truthful like Harishchandra?' was the question I asked myself day and night. To follow truth and to go through all the ordeals Harishchandra went through was the one ideal it inspired in me. I literally believed in the story of Harishchandra. The thought of it all often made me weep. My commonsense tells me today that Harishchandra could not have been a historical character. Still both Harishchandra and Shravana are living realities for me, and I am sure I should be moved as before if I were to read those plays again today.

3. CHILD MARRIAGE

Much as I wish that I had not to write this chapter, I know that I shall have to swallow many such bitter draughts in the course of this narrative. And I cannot do otherwise, if I claim to be a worshipper of Truth. It is my painful duty to have to record here my marriage at the age of thirteen. As I see the youngsters of the same age about me who are under my care, and think of my own marriage, I am inclined to pity myself and to congratulate them on having escaped my lot. I can see no moral argument in support of such a preposterously early marriage.

Let the reader make no mistake. I was married, not betrothed. For in Kathiawad there are two distinct rites—betrothal and marriage. Betrothal is a preliminary promise on the part of the parents of the boy and the girl to join them in marriage, and it is not inviolable. The death of the boy entails no widowhood on the girl. It is an agreement purely between the parents, and the children have no concern with it. Often they are not even informed of it. It appears that I was betrothed thrice, though without my knowledge. I was told that two girls chosen for me had died in turn, and therefore I infer that I was betrothed three times. I have a faint recollection, however, that the third betrothal took place in my seventh year. But I do not recollect having been informed about it. In the present chapter I am talking about my marriage, of which I have the clearest recollection.

It will be remembered that we were three brothers. The first was already married. The elders decided to marry my second brother, who was two or three years my senior; a cousin, possibly a year older; and me, all at the same time. In doing so there was no thought of our welfare, much less of our wishes. It was purely a question of their convenience and economy.

Marriage among Hindus is no simple matter. The parents of the bride and the bridegroom often bring themselves to ruin over it. They waste their substance, they waste their time. Months are taken up over the preparations—in making clothes and ornaments and in preparing budgets for dinners. Each tries to outdo the other in the number and variety of courses to be prepared. Women, whether they have a voice or no, sing themselves hoarse, even get ill, and disturb the peace of their neighbours. These in their turn quietly put up with all the turmoil and bustle, all the dirt and filth, representing the remains of the feasts, because they know that a time will come when they also will be behaving in the same manner.

It would be better, thought my elders, to have all this bother over at one and the same time. Less expense and greater *eclat*. For money could be freely spent if it had only to be spent once instead of thrice. My father

and my uncle were both old, and we were the last children they had to marry. It is likely that they wanted to have the last best time of their lives. In view of all these considerations, a triple wedding was decided upon, and as I have said before, months were taken up in preparation for it.

It was only through these preparations that we got warning of the coming event. I do not think it meant to me anything more than the prospect of good clothes to wear, drum beating, marriage processions, rich dinners, and a strange girl to play with. The carnal desire came later. I propose to draw the curtain over my shame, except for a few details worth recording. To these I shall come later. But even they have little to do with the central idea I have kept before me in writing this story.

So my brother and I were both taken to Porbandar from Rajkot. There are some amusing details of the preliminaries to the final drama—*e.g.* smearing our bodies all over with turmeric paste—but I must omit them.

My father was a Diwan, but nevertheless a servant, and all the more so because he was in favour with the Thakore Saheb. The latter would not let him go until the last moment. And when he did so, he ordered for my father special stage coaches, reducing the journey by two days. But the fates had willed otherwise. Porbandar is 120 miles from Rajkot—a cart journey of five days. My father did the distance in three, but the coach toppled over in the third stage, and he sustained severe injuries. He arrived bandaged all over. Both his and our interest in the coming event was half destroyed, but the ceremonies had to be gone through. For how could the marriage dates be changed? However, I forgot my grief over my father's injuries in the childish amusement of the wedding.

I was devoted to my parents. But no less was I devoted to the passions that flesh is heir to. I had yet to learn that all happiness and pleasure should be sacrificed in devoted service to my parents. And yet, as though by way of punishment for my desire for pleasure, an incident happened which has ever since rankled in my mind, and which I will relate later. Nishkulanand sings: 'Renunciation of objects, without the renunciation of desires, is short-lived, however hard you may try.' Whenever I sing this song or hear it sung, this bitter untoward incident rushes to my memory and fills me with shame.

My father put on a brave face in spite of his injuries, and took full part in the wedding. As I think of it, I can even today call before my mind's eye the place where he sat as he went through the different details of the ceremony. Little did I dream then that one day I should severely criticize my father for having married me as a child. Everything on that day seemed to me right and proper and pleasing. There was also my own

eagerness to get married. And as everything that my father did then struck me as beyond reproach, the recollection of those things is fresh in my memory. I can picture to myself, even today, how we sat on our wedding dais, how we performed the *Saptapadi*,¹ how we, the newly wedded husband and wife, put the sweet *Kansar*² into each other's mouth, and how we began to live together. And oh! that first night. Two innocent children all unwittingly hurled themselves into the ocean of life. My brother's wife had thoroughly coached me about my behaviour on the first night. I do not know who had coached my wife. I have never asked her about it, nor am I inclined to do so now. The reader may be sure that we were too nervous to face each other. We were certainly too shy. How was I to talk to her, and what was I to say? The coaching could not carry me far. But no coaching is really necessary in such matters. The impressions of the former birth are potent enough to make all coaching superfluous. We gradually began to know each other, and to speak freely together. We were the same age. But I took no time in assuming the authority of a husband.

4. PLAYING THE HUSBAND

About the time of my marriage, little pamphlets costing a pice, or a pie (I now forget how much), used to be issued, in which conjugal love, thrift, child marriages, and other such subjects were discussed. Whenever I came across any of these, I used to go through them from cover to cover, and it was a habit with me to forget what I did not like, and to carry out in practice whatever I liked. Lifelong faithfulness to the wife, inculcated in these booklets as the duty of the husband, remained permanently imprinted on my heart. Furthermore, the passion for truth was innate in me, and to be false to her was therefore out of the question. And then there was very little chance of my being faithless at that tender age.

But the lesson of faithfulness had also an untoward effect. 'If I should be pledged to be faithful to my wife, she also should be pledged to be faithful to me,' I said to myself. The thought made me a jealous husband. Her duty was easily converted into my right to exact faithfulness from

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1. 'Saptapadi' are seven steps a Hindu bride and bridegroom walk together, making at the same time promises of mutual fidelity and devotion, after which the marriage becomes irrevocable.
 2. 'Kansar' is a preparation of wheat which the pair partake of together after the completion of the ceremony.

her, and if it had to be exacted, I should be watchfully tenacious of the right. I had absolutely no reason to suspect my wife's fidelity, but jealousy does not wait for reasons. I must needs be forever on the look-out regarding her movements, and therefore she could not go anywhere without my permission. This sowed the seeds of a bitter quarrel between us. The restraint was virtually a sort of imprisonment. And Kasturbai was not the girl to brook any such thing. She made it a point to go out whenever and wherever she liked. More restraint on my part resulted in more liberty being taken by her, and in my getting more and more cross. Refusal to speak to one another thus became the order of the day with us, married children. I think it was quite innocent of Kasturbai to have taken those liberties with my restrictions. How could a guileless girl brook any restraint on going to the temple or on going on visits to friends? If I had the right to impose restrictions on her, had not she also a similar right? All this is clear to me today. But at that time I had to make good my authority as a husband!

Let not the reader think, however, that ours was a life of unrelieved bitterness. For my severities were all based on love. I wanted to *make* my wife an ideal wife. My ambition was to *make* her live a pure life, learn what I learnt, and identify her life and thought with mine.

I do not know whether Kasturbai had any such ambition. She was illiterate. By nature she was simple, independent, persevering, and, with me at least, reticent. She was not impatient of her ignorance, and I do not recollect my studies having ever spurred her to go in for a similar adventure. I fancy, therefore, that my ambition was all one-sided. My passion was entirely centred on one woman, and I wanted it to be reciprocated. But even if there were no reciprocity, it could not be all unrelieved misery because there was active love on one side at least.

I must say I was passionately fond of her. Even at school I used to think of her, and the thought of nightfall and our subsequent meeting was ever haunting me. Separation was unbearable. I used to keep her awake till late in the night with my idle talk. If with this devouring passion there had not been in me a burning attachment to duty, I should either have fallen a prey to disease and premature death, or have sunk into a burdensome existence. But the appointed tasks had to be gone through every morning, and lying to anyone was out of the question. It was this last thing that saved me from many a pitfall.

I have already said that Kasturbai was illiterate. I was very anxious to teach her, but lustful love left me no time. For one thing the teaching had to be done against her will, and that too at night. I dared not meet her

in the presence of the elders, much less talk to her. Kathiawad had then, and to a certain extent has even today, its own peculiar, useless, and barbarous *Purdah*.

Circumstances were thus unfavorable. I must therefore confess that most of my efforts to instruct Kasturbai in our youth were unsuccessful. And when I awoke from the sleep of lust, I had already launched forth into public life, which did not leave me much spare time. I failed likewise to instruct her through private tutors. As a result Kasturbai can now with difficulty write simple letters and understand simple Gujarati. I am sure that had my love for her been absolutely untainted with lust, she would be a learned lady today; for I could then have conquered her dislike for studies. I know that nothing is impossible for pure love.

I have mentioned one circumstance that more or less saved me from the disasters of lustful love. There is another worth noting. Numerous example have convinced me that God ultimately saves him whose motive is pure. Along with the cruel custom of child marriages, Hindu society has another custom which to a certain extent diminishes the evils of the former. Parents do not allow young couples to stay together long. The child-wife spends more than half her time at her father's place. Such was the case with us. That is to say, during the first five years of our married life (from the age of 13 to 18), we could not have lived together longer than an aggregate period of three years. We would hardly have spent six months together, when there would be a call to my wife from her parents. Such calls were very unwelcome in those days, but they saved us both. At the age of eighteen I went to England, and this meant a long and healthy spell of separation. Even after my return from England we hardly stayed together longer than six months. For I had to run up and down between Rajkot and Bombay. Then came the call from South Africa, and that found me already fairly free from the carnal appetite.

5. AT THE HIGH SCHOOL

I have already said that I was learning at the high school when I was married. We three brothers were learning at the same school. The eldest brother was in a much higher class, and the brother who was married at the same time as I was, only one class ahead of me. Marriage resulted in both of us wasting a year. Indeed the result was even worse for my brother, for he gave up studies altogether. Heaven knows how many youths are in the same plight as he. Only in our present Hindu society do studies and

marriage go thus hand in hand.

My studies were continued. I was not regarded as a dunce at the high school. I always enjoyed the affection of my teachers. Certificates of progress and character used to be sent to the parents every year. I never had a bad certificate. In fact I even won prizes after I passed out of the second standard. In the fifth and sixth I obtained scholarships of rupees four and ten respectively, an achievement for which I have to thank good luck more than my merit. For the scholarships were not open to all, but reserved for the best boys amongst those coming from the Sorath Division of Kathiawad. And in those days there could not have been many boys from Sorath in a class of forty to fifty.

My own recollection is that I had not any high regard for my ability. I used to be astonished whenever I won prizes and scholarships. But I very jealously guarded my character. The least little blemish drew tears from my eyes. When I merited, or seemed to the teacher to merit, a rebuke, it was unbearable for me. I remember having once received corporal punishment. I did not so much mind the punishment, as the fact that it was considered my desert. I wept piteously. That was when I was in the first or second standard. There was another such incident during the time when I was in the seventh standard. Dorabji Edulji Gimi was the headmaster then. He was popular among the boys, as he was a disciplinarian, a man of method, and a good teacher. He had made gymnastics and cricket compulsory for boys of the upper standards. I disliked both. I never took part in any exercise, cricket or football, before they were made compulsory. My shyness was one of the reasons for this aloofness, which I now see was wrong. I then had the false notion that gymnastics had nothing to do with education. Today I know that physical training should have as much place in the curriculum as mental training.

I may mention, however, that I was none the worse for abstaining from exercise. That was because I had read in books about the benefits of long walks in the open air, and having liked the advice, I had formed a habit of talking walks, which has still remained with me. These walks gave me a fairly hardy constitution.

The reason for my dislike for gymnastics was my keen desire to serve as nurse to my father. As soon as the school closed, I would hurry home and begin serving him. Compulsory exercise came directly in the way of this service. I requested Mr. Gimi to exempt me from gymnastics so that I might be free to serve my father. But he would not listen to me. Now it happened that one Saturday, when we had school in the morning, I had to go from home to the school for gymnastics at 4 o'clock in the

afternoon. I had no watch, and the clouds deceived me. Before I reached the school the boys had all left. The next day Mr. Gimi, examining the roll, found me marked absent. Being asked the reason for absence, I told him what had happened. He refused to believe me and ordered me to pay a fine one or two annas (I cannot now recall how much).

I was convicted of lying! That deeply pained me. How was I to prove my innocence? There was no way. I cried in deep anguish. I saw that a man of truth must also be a man of care. This was the first and last instance of my carelessness in school. I have a faint recollection that I finally succeeded in getting the fine remitted. The exemption from exercise was of course obtained, as my father wrote himself to the headmaster saying that he wanted me at home after school.

But though I was none the worse for having neglected exercise, I am still paying the penalty of another neglect. I do not know whence I got the notion that good handwriting was not a necessary part of education, but I retained it until I went to England. When later, especially in South Africa, I saw the beautiful handwriting of lawyers and young men born and educated in South Africa, I was ashamed of myself and repented of my neglect. I saw that bad handwriting should be regarded as a sign of an imperfect education. I tried later to improve mine, but it was too late. I could never repair the neglect of my youth. Let every young man and woman be warned by my example, and understand that good handwriting is a necessary part of education. I am now of opinion that children should first be taught the art of drawing before learning how to write. Let the child learn his letters by observation as he does different objects, such as flowers, birds, etc., and let him learn handwriting only after he has learnt to draw objects. He will then write a beautifully formed hand.

Two more reminiscences of my school days are worth recording. I had lost one year because of my marriage, and the teacher wanted me to make good the loss by skipping a class—a privilege usually allowed to industrious boys. I therefore had only six months in the third standard, and was promoted to the fourth after the examinations which are followed by the summer vacation. English became the medium of instruction in most subjects from the fourth standard. I found myself completely at sea. Geometry was a new subject in which I was not particularly strong, and the English medium made it still more difficult for me. The teacher taught the subject very well, but I could not follow him. Often I would lose heart and think of going back to the third standard, feeling that the packing of two years' studies into a single year was too ambitious. But this would discredit not only me, but also the teacher; because, counting on my

industry, he had recommended my promotion. So the fear of the double discredit kept me at my post. When, however, with much effort I reached the thirteenth proposition of Euclid, the utter simplicity of the subject was suddenly revealed to me. A subject which only required a pure and simple use of one's reasoning powers could not be difficult. Ever since that time geometry has been both easy and interesting for me.

Sanskrit, however, proved a harder task. In geometry there was nothing to memorize, whereas in Sanskrit, I thought, everything had to be learnt by heart. This subject also was commenced from the fourth standard. As soon as I entered the sixth I became disheartened. The teacher was a hard taskmaster, anxious, as I thought, to force the boys. There was a sort of rivalry going on between the Sanskrit and the Persian teachers. The Persian teacher was lenient. The boys use to talk among themselves that Persian was very easy and the Persian teacher very good and considerate to the students. The 'easiness' tempted me, and one day I sat in the Persian class. The Sanskrit teacher was grieved. He called me to his side and said: 'How can you forget that you are the son of a Vaishnava father? Won't you learn the language of your own religion? If you have any difficulty, why not come to me? I want to teach you students Sanskrit to the best of my ability. As you proceed further, you will find in it things of absorbing interest. You should not lose heart. Come and sit again in the Sanskrit class.'

This kindness put me to shame. I could not disregard my teacher's affection. Today I cannot but think with gratitude of Krishnashankar Pandya. For if I had not acquired the little Sanskrit that I learnt then, I should have found it difficult to take any interest in our sacred books. In fact I deeply regret that I was not able to acquire a more thorough knowledge of the language, because I have since realized that every Hindu boy and girl should possess sound Sanskrit learning.

It is now my opinion that in all Indian curricula of higher education there should be a place for Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and English, besides of course the vernacular. This big list need not frighten anyone. If our education were more systematic, and the boys free from the burden of having to learn their subjects through a foreign medium, I am sure learning all these languages would not be an irksome task, but a perfect pleasure. A scientific knowledge of one language makes a knowledge of other languages comparatively easy.

In reality, Hindu, Gujarati, and Sanskrit may be regarded as one language, and Persian and Arabic also as one. Though Persian belongs to the Aryan, and Arabic to the Semitic family of languages, there is a close

relationship between Persian and Arabic, because both claim their full growth through the rise of Islam. Urdu I have not regarded as a distinct language, because it has adopted the Hindi grammar, and its vocabulary is mainly Persian and Arabic, and he who would learn good Urdu must learn Persian and Arabic, as one who would learn good Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali, or Marathi must learn Sanskrit.

6. A TRAGEDY

Amongst my few friends at the high school I had, at different times, two who might be called intimate. One of these friendships did not last long, though I never forsook my friend. He forsook me, because I made friends with the other. This latter friendship I regard as a tragedy in my life. It lasted long. I formed it in the spirit of a reformer.

This companion was originally my elder brother's friend. They were classmates. I knew his weaknesses, but I regarded him as a faithful friend. My mother, my eldest brother, and my wife warned me that I was in bad company. I was too proud to heed my wife's warning. But I dared not go against the opinion of my mother and my eldest brother. Nevertheless I pleaded with them saying, 'I know he has the weaknesses you attribute to him, but you do not know his virtues. He cannot lead me astray, as my association with him is meant to reform him. For I am sure that if he reforms his ways, he will be a splendid man. I beg you not to be anxious on my account.'

I do not think this satisfied them, but they accepted my explanation and let me go my way.

I have seen since I had calculated wrongly. A reformer cannot afford to have close intimacy with him whom he seeks to reform. True friendship is an identity of souls rarely to be found in this world. Only between like natures can friendship be altogether worthy and enduring. Friends react on one another. Hence in friendship there is very little scope for reform. I am of opinion that all exclusive intimacies are to be avoided; for man takes in vice far more readily than virtue. And he who would be friends with God must remain alone, or make the whole world his friend. I may be wrong, but my effort to cultivate an intimate friendship proved a failure.

A wave of 'reform' was sweeping over Rajkot at the time when I first came across this friend. He informed me that many of our teachers were secretly taking meat and wine. He also named many well-known people of Rajkot as belonging to the same company. There were also, I was told,

some high-school boys among them.

I was surprised and pained. I asked my friend the reason and he explained it thus: 'We are a weak people because we do not eat meat. The English are able to rule over us, because they are meat-eaters. You know how hardy I am, and how great a runner too. It is because I am a meat-eater. Meat-eaters do not have boils or tumours, and even if they sometimes happen to have any, these heal quickly. Our teachers and other distinguished people who eat meat are no fools. They know its virtues. You should do likewise. There is nothing like trying. Try, and see what strength it gives.'

All these pleas on behalf of meat-eating were not advanced at a single sitting. They represent the substance of a long and elaborate argument which my friend was trying to impress upon me from time to time. My elder brother had already fallen. He therefore supported my friend's argument. I certainly looked feeble-bodied by the side of my brother and this friend. They were both hardier, physically stronger, and more daring. This friend's exploits cast a spell over me. He could run long distances and extraordinarily fast. He was an adept in high and long jumping. He could put up with any amount of corporal punishment. He would often display his exploits to me and, as one is always dazzled when he sees in others the qualities that he lacks himself, I was dazzled by this friend's exploits. This was followed by a strong desire to be like him. I could hardly jump or run. Why should not I also be as strong as he?

Moreover, I was a coward. I used to be haunted by the fear of thieves, ghosts, and serpents. I did not dare to stir out of doors at night. Darkness was a terror to me. It was almost impossible for me to sleep in the dark, as I would imagine ghosts coming from one direction, thieves from another, and serpents from a third. I could not therefore bear to sleep without a light in the room. How could I disclose my fears to my wife—no child, but already at the threshold of youth—sleeping by my side? I knew that she had more courage than I, and I felt ashamed of myself. She knew no fear of serpents and ghosts. She could go out anywhere in the dark. My friend knew all these weaknesses of mine. He would tell me that he could hold in his hand live serpents, could defy thieves, and did not believe in ghosts. And all this was, of course, the result of eating meat.

A doggerel of the Gujarati poet Narmad was in vogue amongst us schoolboys, as follows:

Behold the mighty Englishman

He rules the Indian small,
Because being a meat-eater
He is five cubits tall.

All this had its due effect on me. I was beaten. It began to grow on me that meat-eating was good, that it would make me strong and daring, and that if the whole country took to meat-eating, the English could be overcome.

A day was thereupon fixed for beginning the experiment. It had to be conducted in secret. The Gandhis were Vaishnavas. My parents were particularly staunch Vaishnavas. They would regularly visit the *Haveli*. The family had even its own temples. Jainism was strong in Gujarat, and its influence was felt everywhere and on all occasions. The opposition to and abhorrence of meat-eating that existed in Gujarat among the Jains and Vaishnavas were to be seen nowhere else in India or outside in such strength. These were the traditions in which I was born and bred. And I was extremely devoted to my parents. I knew that the moment they came to know of my having eaten meat, they would be shocked to death. Moreover, my love of truth made me extra cautious. I cannot say that I did not know then that I should have to deceive my parents if I began eating meat. But my mind was bent on the 'reform'. It was not a question of pleasing the palate. I did not know that it had a particularly good relish. I wished to be strong and daring and wanted my countrymen also to be such, so that we might defeat the English and make India free. The word 'Swaraj' I had not yet heard. But I knew what freedom meant. The frenzy of the 'reform' blinded me. And having ensured secrecy, I persuaded myself that mere hiding the deed from parents was no departure from truth.

7. A TRAGEDY (CONTINUED)

So the day came. It is difficult fully to describe my condition. There were on the one hand, the zeal for 'reform', and the novelty of making a momentous departure in life. There was, on the other, the shame of hiding like a thief to do this very thing. I cannot say which of the two swayed me more. We went in search of a lonely spot by the river, and there I saw, for the first time in my life—meat. There was baker's bread also. I relished neither. The goat's meat was as tough as leather. I simply could not eat it. I was sick and had to leave off eating.

I had a very bad night afterwards. A horrible nightmare haunted me. Every time I dropped off to sleep it would seem as though a live goat

were bleating inside me, and I would jump up full of remorse. But then I would remind myself that meat-eating was a duty, and so become more cheerful.

My friend was not a man to give in easily. He now began to cook various delicacies with meat, and dress them neatly. And for dining, no longer was the secluded spot on the river chosen, but a State house, with its dining hall, and tables and chairs, about which my friend had made arrangements in collusion with the chief cook there.

This bait had its effect. I got over my dislike for bread, forswore my compassion for the goats, and became a relisher of meat-dishes, if not of meat itself. This went on for about a year. But not more than half a dozen meat-feasts were enjoyed in all; because the State house was not available every day, and there was the obvious difficulty about frequently preparing expansive savoury meat-dishes. I had no money to pay for this 'reform'. My friend had therefore always to find the wherewithal. I had no knowledge where he found it. But find it he did, because he was bent on turning me into a meat-eater. But even his means must have been limited, and hence these feasts had necessarily to be few and far between.

Whenever I had occasion to indulge in these surreptitious feasts, dinner at home was out of the question. My mother would naturally ask me to come and take my food and want to know the reason why I did not wish to eat. I would say to her, 'I have no appetite today; there is something wrong with my digestion.' It was not without compunction that I devised these pretexts. I knew I was lying, and lying to my mother. I also knew that if my mother and my father came to know of my having become a meat-eater, they would be deeply shocked. This knowledge was gnawing at my heart.

Therefore I said to myself: 'Though it is essential to eat meat, and also essential to take up food 'reform' in the country, yet deceiving and lying to one's father and mother is worse than not eating meat. In their lifetime, therefore, meat-eating must be out of the question. When they are no more and I have found my freedom, I will eat meat openly, but until that moment arrives I will abstain from it.'

This decision I communicated to my friend, and I have never since gone back to meat. My parents never knew that two of their sons had become meat-eaters.

I abjured meat out of the purity of my desire not to lie to my parents, but I did not abjure the company of my friend. My zeal for reforming him had proved disastrous for me, and all the time I was completely

unconscious of the fact.

The same company would have led me into faithlessness to my wife. But I was saved by the skin of my teeth. My friend once took me to a brothel. He sent me in with the necessary instructions. It was all prearranged. The bill had already been paid. I went into the jaws of sin, but

God in His infinite mercy protected me against myself. I was almost struck blind and dumb in this den of vice. I sat near the woman on her bed, but I was tongue-tied. She naturally lost patience with me, and showed me the door, with abuses and insults. I then felt as though my manhood had been injured, and wished to sink into the ground for shame. But I have ever since given thanks to God for having saved me. I can recall four more similar incidents in my life, and in most of them my good fortune, rather than any effort on my part, saved me. From a strictly ethical point of view, all these occasions must be regarded as moral lapses; for the carnal desire was there, and it was as good as the act. But from the ordinary point of view, a man who is saved from physically committing sin is regarded as saved. And I was saved only in that sense. There are some actions from which an escape is a godsend both for the man who escapes and for those about him. Man, as soon as he gets back his consciousness of right, is thankful to the Divine mercy for the escape. As we know that a man often succumbs to temptation, however much he may resist it, we also know that Providence often intercedes and saves him in spite of himself. How all this happens—how far a man is free and how far a creature of circumstances—how far free-will comes into play and where fate enters on the scene—all this is a mystery and will remain a mystery.

But to go on with the story. Even this was far from opening my eyes to the viciousness of my friend's company. I therefore had many more bitter draughts in store for me, until my eyes were actually opened by an ocular demonstration of some of his lapses quite unexpected by me. But of them later, as we are proceeding chronologically.

One thing, however, I must mention now, as it pertains to the same period. One of the reasons of my differences with my wife was undoubtedly the company of this friend. I was both a devoted and a jealous husband, and this friend fanned the flame of my suspicions about my wife. I never could doubt her veracity. And I have never forgiven myself the violence of which I have been guilty, in often having pained my wife by acting on his information. Perhaps only a Hindu wife would tolerate these hardships, and that is why I have regarded woman as an incarnation

of tolerance. A servant wrongly suspected may throw up his job, a son in the same case may leave his father's roof, and a friend may put an end to the friendship. The wife, if she suspects her husband, will keep quiet, but if the husband suspects her, she is ruined. Where is she to go? A Hindu wife may not seek divorce in a law court. Law has no remedy for *her*. And I can never forget or forgive myself for having driven my wife to that desperation.

The canker of suspicion was rooted out only when I understood *Ahimsa*¹ in all its bearings. I saw then the glory of *Brahmacharya*,² and realized that the wife is not the husband's bondslave, but his companion and his helpmate, and an equal partner in all his joys and sorrows—as free as the husband to choose her own path. Whenever I think of those dark days of doubts and suspicions, I am filled with loathing of my folly and my lustful cruelty, and I deplore my blind devotion to my friend.

8. STEALING AND ATONEMENT

I have still to relate some of my failings during this meat-eating period and also previous to it, which date from before my marriage or soon after.

A relative and I became fond of smoking. Not that we saw any good in smoking, or were enamoured of the smell of a cigarette. We simply imagined a sort of pleasure in emitting clouds of smoke from our mouths. My uncle had the habit, and when we saw him smoking, we thought we should copy his example. But we had no money. So we began pilfering stumps of cigarettes thrown away by my uncle.

The stumps, however, were not always available, and could not emit much smoke either. So we began to steal coppers from the servant's pocket money in order to purchase Indian cigarettes. But the question was where to keep them. We could not of course smoke in the presence of elders. We managed somehow for a few weeks on those stolen coppers. In the meantime we heard that the stalks of a certain plant were porous and could be smoked like cigarettes. We got them and began this kind of smoking.

But we were far from being satisfied with such things as these. Our want of independence began to smart. It was unbearable that we should be unable to do anything without the elders' permission. At last, in sheer

1. '*Ahimsa*' means literally not-hurting, non-violence.

2. '*Brahmacharya*' means literally conduct that leads to God. Its technical meaning is self-restraint, particularly mastery over the sexual organ.

disgust, we decided to commit suicide!

But how were we to do it? From where were we to get the poison? We heard that *Dhatura* seeds were an effective poison. Off we went to the jungle in search of these seeds, and got them. Evening was thought to be the auspicious hour. We went to *Kedarji Mandir*, put ghee in the temple-lamp, had the *darshan* and then looked for a lonely corner. But our courage failed us. Supposing we were not instantly killed? And what was the good of killing ourselves? Why not rather put up with the lack of independence? But we swallowed two or three seeds nevertheless. We dared not take more. Both of us fought shy of death, and decided to go to *Ramji Mandir* to compose ourselves, and to dismiss the thought of suicide.

I realized that it was not as easy to commit suicide as to contemplate it. And since then, whenever I have heard of someone threatening to commit suicide, it has had little or no effect on me.

The thought of suicide ultimately resulted in both of us bidding goodbye to the habit of smoking stumps of cigarettes and of stealing the servant's coppers for the purpose of smoking.

Ever since I have been grown up, I have never desired to smoke and have always regarded the habit of smoking as barbarous, dirty and harmful. I have never understood why there is such a rage for smoking throughout the world. I cannot bear to travel in a compartment full of people smoking. I become choked.

But much more serious than this theft was the one I was guilty of a little later. I pilfered the coppers when I was twelve or thirteen, possibly less. The other theft was committed when I was fifteen. In this case I stole a bit of gold out of my meat-eating brother's armlet. This brother had run into a debt of about twenty-five rupees. He had on his arm an armlet of solid gold. It was not difficult to clip a bit out of it.

Well, it was done, and the debt cleared. But this became more than I could bear. I resolved never to steal again. I also made up my mind to confess it to my father. But I did not dare to speak. Not that I was afraid of my father beating me. No, I do not recall his ever having beaten any of us. I was afraid of the pain that I should cause him. But I felt that the risk should be taken; that there could not be a cleansing without a confession.

I decided at last to write out of the confession, to submit it to my father, and ask his forgiveness. I wrote it on a slip of paper and handed it to him myself. In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish himself for my offence. I also pledged myself never to steal in future.

I was trembling as I handed the confession to my father. He was then suffering from a fistula and was confined to bed. His bed was a plain

wooden plank. I handed him the note and sat opposite the plank.

He read it through, and pearl-drops trickled down his cheeks, wetting the paper. For a moment he closed his eyes in thought and then tore up the note. He had sat up to read it. He again laid down. I also cried. I could see my father's agony. If I were a painter. I could draw a picture of the whole scene today. It is still so vivid in my mind.

Those pearl-drops of love cleansed my heart, and washed my sin away. Only he who has experienced such love can know what it is. As the hymn says:

‘Only he

Who is smitten with the arrows of love,

Knows its power.’

This was, for me, an object-lesson in *Ahimsa*. Then I could read in it nothing more than a father's love, but today I know that it was pure *Ahimsa*. When such *Ahimsa* becomes all-embracing, it transforms everything it touches. There is no limit to its power.

This sort of sublime forgiveness was not natural to my father. I had thought that he would be angry, say hard things, and strike his forehead. But he was so wonderfully peaceful, and I believe this was due to my clean confession. A clean confession, combined with a promise never to commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is the purest type of repentance. I know that my confession made my father feel absolutely safe about me, and increased his affection for me beyond measure.

9. MY FATHER'S DEATH AND MY DOUBLE SHAME

The time of which I am now speaking is my sixteenth year. My father, as we have seen, was bed-ridden, suffering from a fistula. My mother, an old servant of the house, and I were his principal attendants. I had the duties of a nurse, which mainly consisted in dressing the wound, giving my father his medicine, and compounding drugs whenever they had to be made up at home. Every night I massaged his legs, and retired only when he asked me to do so or after he had fallen asleep. I loved to do this service. I do not remember ever having neglected it. All the time at my disposal, after the performance of the daily duties, was divided between school and attending on my father. I would only go out for an evening walk either when he permitted me or when he was feeling well.

This was also the time when my wife was expecting a baby—a

circumstance which, as I can see today, meant a double shame for me. For one thing I did not restrain myself, as I should have done, whilst I was yet a student. And secondly, this carnal lust got the better of what I regarded as my duty to study, and of what was even a greater duty, my devotion to my parents, Shravana having been my ideal since childhood. Every night whilst my hands were busy massaging my father's legs, my mind was hovering about the bed-room—and that too at a time when religion, medical science, and commonsense alike forbade sexual intercourse. I was always glad to be relieved from my duty, and went straight to the bed-room after doing obeisance to my father.

At the same time my father was getting worse every day. Ayurvedic physicians had tried all their ointments, Hakims their plasters, and local quacks their nostrums. An English surgeon had also used his skill. As the last and only resort he had recommended a surgical operation. But the family physician came in the way. He disapproved of an operation being performed at such an advanced age. The physician was competent and well known, and his advice prevailed. The operation was abandoned, and various medicines purchased for the purpose were of no account. I have an impression that if the physician had allowed the operation, the wound would have been easily healed. The operation also was to have been performed by a surgeon who was then well known in Bombay. But God had willed otherwise. When death is imminent, who can think of the right remedy? My father returned from Bombay with all the paraphernalia of the operation, which were now useless. He despaired of living any longer. He was getting weaker and weaker, until at last he had to be asked to perform the necessary functions in bed. But up to the last he refused to do anything of the kind, always insisting on going through the strain of leaving his bed. The Vaishnavite rules about external cleanliness are so inexorable.

Such cleanliness is quite essential no doubt, but Western medical science has taught us that all the functions, including a bath, can be done in bed with the strictest regard to cleanliness, and without the slightest discomfort to the patient, the bed always remaining spotlessly clean. I should regard such cleanliness as quite consistent with Vaishnavism. But my father's insistence on leaving the bed only struck me with wonder then, and I had nothing but admiration for it.

The dreadful night came. My uncle was then in Rajkot. I have a faint recollection that he came to Rajkot having had news that my father was getting worse. The brothers were deeply attached to each other. My uncle

would sit near my father's bed the whole day, and would insist on sleeping by his bed-side, after sending us all to sleep. No one had dreamt that this was to be the fateful night. The danger of course was there.

It was 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. I was giving the massage. My uncle offered to relieve me. I was glad and went straight to the bed-room. My wife, poor thing, was fast asleep. But how could she sleep when I was there? I woke her up. In five or six minutes, however, the servant knocked at the door. I started with alarm. 'Get up,' he said, 'Father is very ill.' I knew of course that he was very ill, and so I guessed what 'very ill' meant at that moment. I sprang out of bed.

'What is the matter? Do tell me!'

'Father is no more.'

So all was over! I had but to wring my hands. I felt deeply ashamed and miserable. I ran to my father's room. I saw that if animal passion had not blinded me, I should have been spared the torture of separation from my father during his last moments. I should have been massaging him, and he would have died in my arms. But now it was my uncle who had this privilege. He was so deeply devoted to his elder brother that he had earned the honour of doing him the last services! My father had forebodings of the coming event. He had made a sign for pen and paper, and written: 'Prepare for the last rites.' He had then snapped the amulet off his arm, and also his gold necklace of *tulasi*-beads, and flung them aside. A moment after this he was no more.

The shame, to which I have referred in a foregoing chapter, was this shame of my carnal desire even at the critical hour of my father's death, which demanded wakeful service. It is a blot I have never been able to efface or forget, and I have always thought that although my devotion to my parents knew no bounds and I would have given up anything for it, yet it was weighed and found unpardonably wanting because my mind was at the same moment in the grip of lust. I have therefore always regarded myself as a lustful, though a faithful, husband. It took me long to get free from the shackles of lust, and I had to pass through many ordeals before I could overcome it.

Before I close this chapter of my double shame, I may mention that the poor mite that was born to my wife scarcely breathed for more than three or four days. Nothing else could be expected. Let all those who are married be warned by my example.

10. GLIMPSES OF RELIGION

From my sixth or seventh year up to my sixteenth I was at school,

being taught all sorts of things except religion. I may say that I failed to get from the teachers what they could have given me without any effort on their part. And yet I kept on picking up things here and there from my surroundings. The term 'religion' I am using in its broadest sense, meaning thereby self-realization or knowledge of self.

Being born in the Vaishnava faith, I had often to go to the *Haveli*. But it never appealed to me. I did not like its glitter and pomp. Also I heard rumours of immorality being practised there, and lost all interest in it. Hence I could gain nothing from the *Haveli*.

But what I failed to get there I obtained from my nurse, an old servant of the family, whose affection for me I still recall. I have said before that there was in me a fear of ghosts and spirits. Rambha, for that was her name, suggested, as a remedy for this fear, the repetition of *Ramanama*. I had more faith in her than in her remedy, and so at a tender age I began repeating *Ramanama* to cure my fear of ghosts and spirits. This was of course short-lived, but the good seed sown in childhood was not sown in vain. I think it is due to the seed sown by that good woman Rambha that today *Ramanama* is an infallible remedy for me.

Just about this time, a cousin of mine who was a devotee of the *Ramayana* arranged for my second brother and me to learn *Ram Raksha*. We got it by heart, and made it a rule to recite it every morning after the bath. The practice was kept up as long as we were in Porbandar. As soon as we reached Rajkot, it was forgotten. For I had not much belief in it. I recited it partly because of my pride in being able to recite *Ram Raksha* with correct pronunciation.

What, however, left a deep impression on me was the reading of the *Ramayana* before my father. During part of his illness my father was in Porbandar. There every evening he used to listen to the *Ramayana*. The reader was a great devotee of Rama—Ladha Maharaj of Bileshvar. It was said of him that he cured himself of his leprosy not by any medicine, but by applying to the affected parts *bilva* leaves which had been cast away after being offered to the image of Mahadeva in Bileshvar temple, and by the regular repetition of *Ramanama*. His faith, it was said, had made him whole. This may or may not be true. We at any rate believed the story. And it is a fact that when Ladha Maharaj began his reading of the *Ramayana* his body was entirely free from leprosy. He had a melodious voice. He would sing the *Dohas* (couplets) and *Chopais* (quatrains) and explain them, losing himself in the discourse and carrying his listeners along with him. I must have been thirteen at that time, but I quite remember

being enraptured by his reading. That laid the foundation of my deep devotion to the *Ramayana*. Today I regard the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas as the greatest book in all devotional literature.

A few months after this we came to Rajkot. There was no *Ramayana* reading there. The *Bhagavat*, however, used to be read on every *Ekadashi*¹ day. Sometimes I attended the reading, but the reciter was uninspiring. Today I see that the *Bhagavat* is a book which can evoke religious fervour. I have read it in Gujarati with intense interest. But when I heard portions of the original read by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya during my twenty-one days' fast, I wished I had heard it in my childhood from such a devotee as he is, so that I could have formed a liking for it at an early age. Impressions formed at that age strike roots deep down into one's nature, and it is my perpetual regret that I was not fortunate enough to hear more good books of this kind read during that period.

In Rajkot, however, I got an early grounding in toleration for all branches of Hinduism and sister religions. For my father and mother would visit the *Haveli* as also Shiva's and Rama's temples, and would take or send us youngsters there. Jain monks also would pay frequent visits to my father, and would even go out of their way to accept food from us—non-Jains. They would have talks with my father on subjects religious and mundane.

He had, besides, Musalman and Parsi friends who would talk to him about their own faiths, and he would listen to them always with respect, and often with interest. Being his nurse, I often had a chance to be present at these talks. These many things combined to inculcate in me a toleration for all faiths.

Only Christianity was at that time an exception. I developed a sort of dislike for it. And for a reason. In those days Christian missionaries used to stand in a corner near the high school and hold forth, pouring abuse on Hindus and their gods. I could not endure this. I must have stood there to hear them once only, but that was enough to dissuade me from repeating the experiment. About the same time, I heard of a well known Hindu having been converted to Christianity. It was the talk of the town that, when he was baptized, he had to eat beef and drink liquor, that he also had to change his clothes, and that thenceforth he began to go about in European costume, including a hat. These things got on my nerves. Surely, thought I, a religion that compelled one to eat beef, drink liquor, and change one's own clothes did not deserve the name. I also heard that the

1. Eleventh day of the bright and the dark half of a lunar month.

new convert had already begun abusing the religion of his ancestors, their customs and their country. All these things created in me a dislike for Christianity.

But the fact that I had learnt to be tolerant to other religions did not mean that I had any living faith in God. I happened, about this time, to come across *Manusmriti*,¹ which was amongst my father's collection. The story of the creation and similar things in it did not impress me very much, but on the contrary made me incline somewhat towards atheism.

There was a cousin of mine, still alive, for whose intellect I had great regard. To him I turned with my doubts. But he could not resolve them. He sent me away with this answer: 'When you grow up, you will be able to solve these doubts yourself. These questions ought not to be raised at your age.' I was silenced, but was not comforted. Chapters about diet and the like in *Manusmriti* seemed to me to run contrary to daily practice. To my doubts as to this also, I got the same answer. 'With intellect more developed and with more reading I shall understand it better,' I said to myself.

Manusmriti at any rate did not then teach me *ahimsa*. I have told the story of my meat-eating. *Manusmriti* seemed to support it. I also felt that it was quite moral to kill serpents, bugs, and the like. I remember to have killed at that age bugs and such other insects, regarding it as a duty.

But one thing took deep root in me—the conviction that morality is the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality. Truth became my sole objective. It began to grow in magnitude every day, and my definition of it also has been ever widening.

A Gujarati didactic stanza likewise gripped my mind and heart. Its precept—return good for evil—became my guiding principle. It became such a passion with me that I began numerous experiments in it. Here are those wonderful lines:

For a bowl of water give a goodly meal;
For a kindly greeting bow thou down with zeal;
For a simple penny pay thou back with gold;
If thy life be rescued, life do not withhold.
Thus the words and actions of the wise regard;
Every little service tenfold they reward.
But the truly noble know all men as one,
And return with gladness good for evil done

1. Laws of Manu, a Hindu law-giver. They have the sanction of religion.

11. PREPARATION FOR ENGLAND

I passed the matriculation examination in 1887. It then used to be held at two centres, Ahmedabad and Bombay. The general poverty of the country naturally led Kathiawad students to prefer the nearer and the cheaper centre. The poverty of my family likewise dictated to me the same choice. This was my first journey from Rajkot to Ahmedabad, and that too without a companion.

My elders wanted me to pursue my studies at college after the matriculation. There was a college in Bhavnagar as well as in Bombay, and as the former was cheaper, I decided to go there and join the Samaldas College. I went, but found myself entirely at sea. Everything was difficult. I could not follow, let alone taking interest in, the professors' lectures. It was no fault of theirs. The professors in that College were regarded as first-rate. But I was so raw. At the end of the first term, I returned home.

We had in Mavji Dave, who was a shrewd and learned Brahman, an old friend and adviser of the family. He had kept up his connection with the family even after my father's death. He happened to visit us during my vacation. In conversation with my mother and elder brother, he inquired about my studies. Learning that I was at Samaldas College, he said: 'The times are changed. And none of you can expect to succeed to your father's *gadi* without having had a proper education. Now as this boy is still pursuing his studies, you should all look to him to keep the *gadi*. It will take him four or five years to get his B.A. degree, which will at best qualify him for a sixty rupees' post, not for a Diwanship. If like my son he went in for law, it would take him longer still, by which time there would be a host of lawyers aspiring for a Diwan's post. I would far rather that you sent him to England. My son Kevalram says it is very easy to become a barrister. In three years' time he will return. Also, expenses will not exceed four to five thousand rupees. Think of that barrister who has just come back from England. How stylishly he lives! He could get the Diwanship for the asking. I would strongly advise you to send Mohandas to England this very year. Kevalram has numerous friends in England. He will give notes of introduction to them, and Mohandas will have an easy time of it there.'

Joshiji—that is how we used to call old Mavji Dave—turned to me with complete assurance, and asked: 'Would you not rather go to England than study here?' Nothing could have been more welcome to me. I was fighting shy of my difficult studies. So I jumped at the proposal, and said that the sooner I was sent the better. It was no easy business to pass

examinations quickly. Could I not be sent to qualify for the medical profession?

My brother interrupted me: 'Father never liked it. He had you in mind when he said that we Vaishnavas should have nothing to do with dissection of dead bodies. Father intended you for the bar.'

Joshiji chimed in: 'I am not opposed to the medical profession as was Gandhiji. Our *Shastras* are not against it. But a medical degree will not make a Diwan of you, and I want you to be Diwan, or if possible something better. Only in that way could you take under your protecting care your large family. The times are fast changing and getting harder every day. It is the wisest thing therefore to become a barrister.' Turning to my mother he said: 'Now, I must leave. Pray ponder over what I have said. When I come here next I shall expect to hear of preparations for England. Be sure to let me know if I can assist in any way.'

Joshiji went away, and I began building castles in the air.

My elder brother was greatly exercised in his mind. How was he to find the wherewithal to send me? And was it proper to trust a young man like me to go abroad alone?

My mother was surely perplexed. She did not like the idea of parting with me. This is how she tried to put me off: 'Uncle,' she said, 'is now the eldest member of the family. He should first be consulted. If he consents we will consider the matter.'

My brother had another idea. He said to me: 'We have a certain claim on the Porbandar State. Mr. Lely is the Administrator. He thinks highly of our family, and uncle is in his good books. It is just possible that he might recommend you for some State help for your education in England.'

I liked all this, and got ready to start off for Porbandar. There was no railway in those days. It was a five days' bullock-cart journey. I have already said that I was a coward. But at that moment my cowardice vanished before the desire to go to England, which completely possessed me. I hired a bullock-cart as far as Dhoraji, and from Dhoraji I took a camel in order to get to Porbandar a day quicker. This was my first camel-ride.

I arrived at last, did obeisance to my uncle, and told him everything. He thought it over and said: 'I am not sure whether it is possible for one to stay in England without prejudice to one's own religion. From all I have heard, I have my doubts. When I meet these big barristers, I see no difference between their life and that of Europeans. They know no scruples regarding food. Cigars are never out of their mouths. They dress as

shamelessly as Englishmen. All that would not be in keeping with our family tradition. I am shortly going on a pilgrimage and have not many years to live. At the threshold of death, how dare I give you permission to go to England, to cross the seas? But I will not stand in your way. It is your mother's permission which really matters. If she permits you, then godspeed! Tell her I will not interfere. You will go with my blessings.'

'I could expect nothing more from you,' said I. 'I shall now try to win mother over. But would you not recommend me to Mr. Lely?

'How can I do that?' said he. 'But he is a good man. You ask for an appointment telling him how you are connected. He will certainly give you one and may even help you.'

I cannot say why my uncle did not give me a note of recommendation. I have a faint idea that he hesitated to co-operate directly in my going to England, which was in his opinion an irreligious act.

I wrote to Mr. Lely, who asked me to see him at his residence. He saw me as he was ascending the staircase; and saying curtly, 'Pass your B.A. first and then see me. No help can be given you now,' he hurried upstairs. I had made elaborate preparations to meet him. I had carefully learnt up a few sentences and had bowed low and saluted him with both hands. But all to no purpose!

I thought of my wife's ornaments. I thought of my elder brother, in whom I had the utmost faith. He was generous to a fault, and he loved me as his son.

I returned to Rajkot from Porbandar and reported all that had happened. I consulted Joshiji, who of course advised even incurring a debt if necessary. I suggested the disposal of my wife's ornaments, which could fetch about two to three thousand rupees. My brother promised to find the money somehow.

My mother, however, was still unwilling. She had begun making minute inquiries. Someone had told her that young men got lost in England. Someone else had said that they took to meat; and yet another that they could not live there without liquor. 'How about all this?' she asked me. I said: 'Will you not trust me? I shall not lie to you. I swear that I shall not touch any of those things. If there were any such danger, would Joshiji let me go?'

'I can trust you,' she said. 'But how can I trust you in a distant land? I am dazed and know not what to do. I will ask Becharji Swami.'

Becharji Swami was originally a Modh Bania, but had now become a Jain monk. He too was a family adviser like Joshiji. He came to my help, and said: 'I shall get the boy solemnly to take the three vows, and

then he can be allowed to go.' He administered the oath and I vowed not to touch wine, woman, and meat. This done, my mother gave her permission.

The high school had a send-off in my honour. It was an uncommon thing for a young man of Rajkot to go to England. I had written out a few words of thanks. But I could scarcely stammer them out. I remember how my head reeled and how my whole frame shook as I stood up to read them.

With the blessings of my elders, I started for Bombay. This was my first journey from Rajkot to Bombay. My brother accompanied me. But there is many a slip, 'twixt the cup and the lip. There were difficulties to be faced in Bombay.

12. OUTCASTE

With my mother's permission and blessings, I set off exultantly for Bombay, leaving my wife with a baby of a few months. But on arrival there, friends told my brother that the Indian Ocean was rough in June and July, and as this was my first voyage, I should not be allowed to sail until November. Someone also reported that a steamer had just been sunk in a gale. This made my brother uneasy, and he refused to take the risk of allowing me to sail immediately. Leaving me with a friend in Bombay, he returned to Rajkot to resume his duty. He put the money for my travelling expenses in the keeping of a brother-in-law, and left word with some friends to give me whatever help I might need.

Time hung heavily on my hands in Bombay. I dreamt continually of going to England.

Meanwhile my caste-people were agitated over my going abroad. No Modh Bania had been to England up to now, and if I dared to do so, I ought to be brought to book! A general meeting of the caste was called and I was summoned to appear before it. I went. How I suddenly managed to muster up courage I do not know. Nothing daunted, and without the slightest hesitation, I came before the meeting. The Seth—the headman of the community—who was distantly related to me and had been on very good terms with my father, thus accosted me:

'In the opinion of the caste, your proposal to go to England is not proper. Our religion forbids voyages abroad. We have also heard that it is not possible to live there without compromising our religion. One is obliged to eat and drink with Europeans!'

To which I replied: 'I do not think it is at all against our religion to go to England. I intend going there for further studies. And I have solemnly promised to my mother to abstain from three things you fear most. I am sure the vow will keep me safe.'

'But we tell you,' rejoined the Seth, 'that it is *not* possible to keep our religion there. You know my relations with your father and you ought to listen to my advice.'

'I know these relations,' said I. 'And you are as an elder to me. But I am helpless in this matter. I cannot alter my resolve to go to England. My father's friend and adviser, who is a learned Brahman, sees no objection to my going to England, and my mother and brother have also given me their permission.'

'But will you disregard the orders of the caste?'

'I am really helpless. I think the caste should not interfere in the matter.'

This incensed the Seth. He swore at me. I sat unmoved. So the Seth pronounced his order: 'This boy shall be treated as an outcaste from today. Whoever helps him or goes to see him off at the dock shall be punishable with a fine of one rupee four annas.'

The order had no effect on me, and I took my leave of the Seth. But I wondered how my brother would take it. Fortunately he remained firm and wrote to assure me that I had his permission to go, the Seth's order notwithstanding.

The incident, however, made me more anxious than ever to sail. What would happen if they succeeded in bringing pressure to bear on my brother? Supposing something unforeseen happened? As I was thus worrying over my predicament, I heard that a Junagadh wakil was going to England, for being called to the bar, by a boat sailing on the 4th of September. I met the friends to whose care my brother had commended me. They also agreed that I should not let go the opportunity of going in such company. There was no time to be lost. I wired to my brother for permission, which he granted. I asked my brother-in-law to give me the money. But he referred to the order of the Seth and said that he could not afford to lose caste. I then sought a friend of the family and requested him to accommodate me to the extent of my passage and sundries, and to recover the loan from my brother. The friend was not only good enough to accede to my request, but he cheered me up as well. I was so thankful. With part of the money I at once purchased the passage. Then I had to equip myself for the voyage. There was another friend who had experience in the matter. He got clothes and other things ready. Some of the clothes

I liked and some I did not like at all. The necktie, which I delighted in wearing later, I then abhorred. The short jacket I looked upon as immodest. But this dislike was nothing before the desire to go to England, which was uppermost in me. Of provisions also I had enough and to spare for the voyage. A berth was reserved for me by my friends in the same cabin as that of Sjt. Tryambakrai Mazmudar, the Junagadh vakil. They also commended me to him. He was an experienced man of mature age and knew the world. I was yet a stripling of eighteen without any experience of the world. Sjt. Mazmudar told my friends not to worry about me.

I sailed at last from Bombay on the 4th of September.

13. IN LONDON AT LAST

I did not feel at all sea-sick. But as the days passed, I became fidgety. I felt shy even in speaking to the steward. I was quite unaccustomed to talking English, and except for Sjt. Mazmudar all the other passengers in the second saloon were English. I could not speak to them. For I could rarely follow their remarks when they came up to speak to me, and even when I understood I could not reply. I had to frame every sentence in my mind, before I could bring it out. I was innocent of the use of knives and forks, and had not the boldness to inquire what dishes on the menu were free of meat. I therefore never took meals at table but always had them in my cabin, and they consisted principally of sweets and fruits which I had brought with me. Sjt. Mazmudar had no difficulty, and he mixed with everybody. He would move about freely on deck, while I hid myself in the cabin the whole day, only venturing up on deck when there were but few people. Sjt. Mazmudar kept pleading with me to associate with the passengers and to talk with them freely. He told me that lawyers should have a long tongue, and related to me his legal experiences. He advised me to take every possible opportunity of talking English, and not to mind making mistakes which were obviously unavoidable with a foreign tongue. But nothing could make me conquer my shyness.

An English passenger, taking kindly to me, drew me into conversation. He was older than I. He asked me what I ate, what I was, where I was going, why I was shy, and so on. He also advised me to come to table. He laughed at my insistence on abjuring meat, and said in a friendly way when we were in the Red Sea: 'It is all very well so far, but you will have to revise your decision in the Bay of Biscay. And it is so cold in England that one cannot possibly live there without meat.'

‘But I have heard that people *can* live there without eating meat,’ I said.

‘Rest assured it is a fib,’ said he. ‘No one, to my knowledge, lives there without being a meat-eater. Don’t you see that I am not asking you to take liquor, though I do so? But I do think you should eat meat, for you cannot live without it.’

‘I thank you for your kind advice, but I have solemnly promised to my mother not to touch meat, and therefore I cannot think of taking it. If it be found impossible to get on without it, I will far rather go back to India than eat meat in order to remain there.’

We entered the Bay of Biscay, but I did not begin to feel the need either of meat or liquor. I had been advised to collect certificates of my having abstained from meat, and I asked the English friend to give me one. He gladly gave it, and I treasured it for some time. But when I saw later that one could get such a certificate in spite of being a meat-eater, it lost all its charm for me. If my word was not to be trusted, where was the use of possessing a certificate in the matter?

However, we reached Southampton, as far as I remember, on a Saturday. On the boat I had worn a black suit, the white flannel one which my friend had got me having been kept especially for wearing when I landed. I had thought that white clothes would suit me better when I stepped ashore, and therefore I did so in white flannels. Those were the last days of September, and I found I was the only person wearing such clothes. I left in charge of an agent of Grindlay and Co. all my kit, including the keys, seeing that many others had done the same and I must follow suit.

I had four notes of introduction: to Dr. P. J. Mehta, to Sjt. Dalpatram Shukla, to Prince Ranjitsinhji, and to Dadabhai Naoroji. Someone on board had advised us to put up at the Victoria Hotel in London. Sjt. Mazmudar and I accordingly went there. The shame of being the only person in white clothes was already too much for me. And when at the hotel I was told that I should not get my things from Grindlay’s the next day, it being a Sunday, I was exasperated.

Dr. Mehta, to whom I had wired from Southampton, called at about eight o’clock the same evening. He gave me a hearty greeting. He smiled at my being in flannels. As we were talking, I casually picked up his top-hat, and trying to see how smooth it was, passed my hand over it the wrong way and disturbed the fur. Dr. Mehta looked somewhat angrily at what I was doing and stopped me. But the mischief had been done. The incident was a warning for the future. This was my first lesson in European

etiquette, into the details of which Dr. Mehta humourously initiated me. 'Do not touch other people's things,' he said. 'Do not ask questions as we usually do in India on first acquaintance; do not talk loudly; never address people as 'sir' whilst speaking to them as we do in India; only servants and subordinates address their masters that way.' And so on and so forth. He also told me that it was very expensive to live in a hotel and recommended that I should live with a private family. We deferred consideration of the matter until Monday.

Sjt. Mazmudar and I found the hotel to be a trying affair. It was also very expensive. There was, however, a Sindhi fellow-passenger from Malta who had become friends with Sjt. Mazmudar, and as he was not a stranger to London, he offered to find rooms for us. We agreed, and on Monday, as soon as we got our baggage, we paid up our bills and went to the rooms rented for us by the Sindhi friend. I remember my hotel bill came to £3, an amount which shocked me. And I had practically starved in spite of this heavy bill! For I could relish nothing. When I did not like one thing, I asked for another, but had to pay for both just the same. The fact is that all this while I had depended on the provisions which I had brought with me from Bombay.

I was very uneasy even in the new rooms. I would continually think of my home and country. My mother's love always haunted me. At night the tears would stream down my cheeks, and home memories of all sorts made sleep out of the question. It was impossible to share my misery with anyone. And even if I could have done so, where was the use? I knew of nothing that would soothe me. Everything was strange—the people, their ways, and even their dwellings. I was a complete novice in the matter of English etiquette, and continually had to be on my guard. There was the additional inconvenience of the vegetarian vow. Even the dishes that I could eat were tasteless and insipid. I thus found myself between Scylla and Charybdis. England I could not bear, but to return to India was not to be thought of. Now that I had come, I must finish the three years, said the inner voice.

14. MY CHOICE

Dr. Mehta went on Monday to the Victoria Hotel, expecting to find me there. He discovered that we had left, got our new address, and met me at our rooms. Through sheer folly I had managed to get ringworm on the boat. For washing and bathing we used to have sea-water, in which soap is not soluble. I, however, used soap, taking its use to be a sign of

civilization, with the result that instead of cleaning the skin it made it greasy. This gave me ringworm. I showed it to Dr. Mehta, who told me to apply acetic acid. I remember how the burning acid made me cry. Dr. Mehta inspected my room and its appointments and shook his head in disapproval. 'This place won't do,' he said. 'We come to England not so much for the purpose of studies as for gaining experience of English life and customs. And for this you need to live with a family. But before you do so, I think you had better serve a period of apprenticeship with ——. I will take you there.'

I gratefully accepted the suggestion and removed to the friend's rooms. He was all kindness and attention. He treated me as his own brother, initiated me into English ways and manners, and accustomed me to talking the language. My food, however, became a serious question. I could not relish boiled vegetables cooked without salt or condiments. The landlady was at a loss to know what to prepare for me. We had oatmeal porridge for breakfast, which was fairly filling, but I always starved at lunch and dinner. The friend continually reasoned with me to eat meat, but I always pleaded my vow and then remained silent. Both for luncheon and dinner we had spinach and bread and jam too. I was good eater and had a capacious stomach; but I was ashamed to ask for more than two or three slices of bread, as it did not seem correct to do so. Added to this, there was no milk either for lunch or dinner. The friend once got disgusted with this state of things, and said: 'Had you been my own brother, I would have sent you packing. What is the value of a vow made before an illiterate mother, and in ignorance of conditions here? It is no vow at all. It would not be regarded as vow in law. It is pure superstition to stick to such a promise. And I tell you this persistence will not help you to gain anything here. You confess to having eaten and relished meat. You took it where it was absolutely unnecessary, and will not where it is quite essential. What a pity!'

But I was adamant.

Day in and day out the friend would argue, but I had an eternal negative to face him with. The more he argued, the more uncompromising I became. Daily I would pray for God's protection and get it. Not that I had any idea of God. It was faith that was at work—faith of which the seed had been sown by the good nurse Rambha.

One day the friend began to read to me Bentham's *Theory of Utility*. I was at my wits' end. The language was too difficult for me to understand. He began to expound it. I said: 'Pray excuse me. These abstruse things are beyond me. I admit it is necessary to eat meat. But I cannot break my

vow. I cannot argue about it. I am sure I cannot meet you in argument. But please give me up as foolish or obstinate. I appreciate your love for me and I know you to be my well-wisher. I also know that you are telling me again and again about this because you feel for me. But I am helpless. A vow is a vow. It cannot be broken.'

The friend looked at me in surprise. He closed the book and said: 'All right. I will not argue any more.' I was glad. He never discussed the subject again. But he did not cease to worry about me. He smoked and drank, but he never asked me to do so. In fact, he asked me to remain away from both. His one anxiety was lest I should become very weak without meat, and thus be unable to feel at home in England.

That is how I served my apprenticeship for a month. The friend's house was in Richmond, and it was not possible to go to London more than once or twice a week. Dr. Mehta and Sjt. Dalpatram Shukla therefore decided that I should be put with some family. Sjt. Shukla hit upon an Anglo-Indian's house in West Kensington and placed me there. The landlady was a widow. I told her about my vow. The old lady promised to look after me properly, and I took up my residence in the house. Here too I practically had to starve. I had sent for sweets and other eatables from home, but nothing had yet come. Everything was insipid. Every day the old lady asked me whether I liked the food, but what could she do? I was still as shy as ever and dared not ask for more than was put before me. She had two daughters. They insisted on serving me with an extra slice or two of bread. But little did they know that nothing less than a loaf would have filled me.

But I had found my feet now. I had not yet started upon my regular studies. I had just begun reading newspapers, thanks to Sjt. Shukla. In India I had never read a newspaper. But here I succeeded in cultivating a liking for them by regular reading. I always glanced over *The Daily News*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Pall Mall Gazette*. This took me hardly an hour. I therefore began to wander about. I launched out in search of a vegetarian restaurant. The landlady had told me that there were such places in the city. I would trot ten or twelve miles each day, go into a cheap restaurant and eat my fill of bread, but would never be satisfied. During these wanderings I once hit on a vegetarian restaurant in Farringdon Street. The sight of it filled me with the same joy that a child feels on getting a thing after its own heart. Before I entered I noticed books for sale exhibited under a glass window near the door. I saw among them Salt's *Plea for Vegetarianism*. This I purchased for a shilling and went straight to the

dining room. This was my first hearty meal since my arrival in England. God had come to my aid.

I read Salt's book from cover to cover and was very much impressed by it. From the date of reading this book, I may claim to have become a vegetarian by choice. I blessed the day on which I had taken the vow before my mother. I had all along abstained from meat in the interests of truth and of the vow I had taken, but had wished at the same time that every Indian should be a meat-eater, and had looked forward to being one myself freely and openly some day, and to enlisting others in the cause. The choice was now made in favour of vegetarianism, the spread of which henceforward became my mission.

15. PLAYING THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN

My faith in vegetarianism grew on me from day to day. Salt's book whetted my appetite for dietetic studies. I went in for all books available on vegetarianism and read them. One of these, Howard Williams' *The Ethics of Diet*, was a 'biographical history of the literature of humane dietetics from the earliest period to the present day.' It tried to make out that all philosophers and prophets, from Pythagoras and Jesus down to those of the present age, were vegetarians. Dr. Anna Kingsford's *The Perfect Way in Diet* was also an attractive book. Dr. Allinson's writings on health and hygiene were likewise very helpful. He advocated a curative system based on regulation of the dietary of patients. Himself a vegetarian, he prescribed for his patients also a strictly vegetarian diet. The result of reading all this literature was that dietetic experiments came to take an important place in my life. Health was the principal consideration of these experiments, to begin with. But later on religion became the supreme motive.

Meanwhile my friend had not ceased to worry about me. His love for me led him to think that if I persisted in my objections to meat eating, I should not only develop a weak constitution, but should remain a duffer, because I should never feel at home in English society. When he came to know that I had begun to interest myself in books on vegetarianism, he was afraid lest these studies should muddle my head; that I should fritter my life away in experiments, forgetting my own work, and become a crank. He therefore made one last effort to reform me. He one day invited me to go to the theatre. Before the play we were to dine together at the Holborn Restaurant, to me a palatial place and the first big restaurant I

had been to since leaving the Victoria Hotel. The stay at that hotel had scarcely been a helpful experience, for I had not lived there with my wits about me. The friend had planned to take me to this restaurant, evidently imagining that modesty would forbid any questions. And it was a very big company of diners, in the midst of which my friend and I sat sharing a table between us. The first course was soup. I wondered what it might be made of, but dared not ask the friend about it. I therefore summoned the waiter. My friend saw the movement and sternly asked across the table what was the matter. With considerable hesitation I told him that I wanted to inquire if the soup was a vegetable soup. 'You are too clumsy for decent society,' he passionately exclaimed. 'If you cannot behave yourself, you had better go. Feed in some other restaurant and await me outside.' This delighted me. Out I went. There was a vegetarian restaurant close by, but it was closed. So I went without food that night. I accompanied my friend to the theatre, but he never said a word about the scene I had created. On my part of course there was nothing to say.

That was the last friendly tussle we had. It did not affect our relations in the least. I could see and appreciate the love by which all my friend's efforts were actuated, and my respect for him was all the greater on account of our differences in thought and action.

But I decided that I should put him at ease, that I should assure him that I would be clumsy no more, but try to become polished and make up for my vegetarianism by cultivating other accomplishments which fitted one for polite society. And for this purpose I undertook the all too impossible task of becoming an English gentleman.

The clothes after the Bombay cut that I was wearing were, I thought, unsuitable for English society, and I got new ones at the Army and Navy Stores. I also went in for a chimney-pot hat costing nineteen shillings—an excessive price in those days. Not content with this, I wasted ten pounds on an evening suit made in Bond Street, the centre of fashionable life in London; and got my good and noble-hearted brother to send me a double watch-chain of gold. It was not correct to wear a ready-made tie, and I learnt the art of tying one for myself. While in India, the mirror had been a luxury permitted on the days when the family barber gave me a shave. Here I wasted ten minutes every day before a huge mirror, watching myself arranging my tie and parting my hair in the correct fashion. My hair was by no means soft, and every day it meant a regular struggle with the brush to keep it in position. Each time the hat was put on and off, the hand would automatically move towards the head to adjust the hair, not to mention the other civilized habit of the hand every now and then

operating for the same purpose when sitting in polished society.

As if all this were not enough to make me look the thing, I directed my attention to other details that were supposed to go towards the making of an English gentleman. I was told it was necessary for me to take lessons in dancing, French, and elocution. French was not only the language of neighbouring France, but it was the *lingua franca* of the Continent over which I had a desire to travel. I decided to take dancing lessons at a class and paid down £3 as fees for a term. I must have taken about six lessons in three weeks. But it was beyond me to achieve anything like rhythmic motion. I could not follow the piano and hence found it impossible to keep time. What then was I to do? The recluse in the fable kept a cat to keep off the rats, and then a cow to feed the cat with milk, and a man to keep the cow and so on. My ambitions also grew like the family of the recluse. I thought I should learn to play the violin in order to cultivate an ear for Western music. So I invested £3 in a violin and something more in fees. I sought a third teacher to give me lessons in elocution and paid him a preliminary fee of a guinea. He recommended Bell's *Standard Elocutionist* as the text book, which I purchased. And I began with a speech of Pitt's.

But Mr. Bell rang the bell of alarm in my ear and I awoke.

I had not to spend a lifetime in England, I said to myself. What then was the use of learning elocution? And how could dancing make a gentleman of me? The violin I could learn even in India. I was a student and ought to go on with my studies. I should qualify myself to join the Inns of Court. If my character made a gentleman of me, so much the better. Otherwise I should forego the ambition.

These and similar thoughts possessed me, and I expressed them in a letter which I addressed to the elocution teacher, requesting him to excuse me from further lessons. I had taken only two or three. I wrote a similar letter to the dancing teacher, and went personally to the violin teacher with a request to dispose of the violin for any price it might fetch. She was rather friendly to me, so I told her how I had discovered that I was pursuing a false ideal. She encouraged me in the determination to make a complete change.

This infatuation must have lasted about three months. The punctiliousness in dress persisted for years. But henceforward I became a student.

16. CHANGES

Let no one imagine that my experiments in dancing and the like marked a stage of indulgence in my life. The reader will have noticed that even then I had my wits about me. That period of infatuations was not unrelieved by a certain amount of self-introspection on my part. I kept account of every farthing I spent, and my expenses were carefully calculated. Every little item, such as omnibus fares or postage or a couple of coppers spent on newspapers, would be entered, and the balance struck every evening before going to bed. That habit has stayed with me ever since, and I know that as a result, though I have had to handle public funds amounting to lakhs, I have succeeded in exercising strict economy in their disbursement, and instead of outstanding debts have had invariably a surplus balance in respect of all the movements I have led. Let every youth take a leaf out of my book and make it a point to account for everything that comes into and goes out of his pocket, and like me he is sure to be a gainer in the end.

As I kept strict watch over my way of living, I could see that it was necessary to economize. I therefore decided to reduce my expenses by half. My accounts showed numerous items spent on fares. Again my living with a family meant the payment of a regular weekly bill. It also included the courtesy of occasionally taking members of the family out to dinner, and likewise attending parties with them. All this involved heavy items for conveyances, especially as, if the friend was a lady, custom required that the man should pay all the expenses. Also, dining out meant extra cost, as no deduction could be made from the regular weekly bill for meals not taken. It seemed to me that all these items could be saved, as likewise the drain on my purse caused through a false sense of propriety.

So I decided to take rooms on my own account, instead of living any longer in a family, and also to move from place to place according to the work I had to do, thus gaining experience at the same time. The rooms were so selected as to enable me to reach the place of business on foot in half an hour, and so save fares. Before this I had always taken some kind of conveyance whenever I went anywhere, and had to find extra time for walks. The new arrangement combined walks and economy, as it meant a saving of fares and gave me walks of eight or ten miles a day. It was mainly this habit of long walks that kept me practically free from illness throughout my stay in England and gave me a fairly strong body.

Thus I rented a suite of rooms; one for a sitting room and another for a bedroom. This was the second stage. The third was yet to come.

These changes saved me half the expense. But how was I to utilize the time? I knew that Bar examinations did not require much study, and I therefore did not feel pressed for time. My weak English was a perpetual worry to me. Mr. Lely's words, 'Graduate first and then come to me,' still rang in my ears. I should, I thought, not only be called to the bar, but have some literary degree as well. I inquired about the Oxford and Cambridge University courses, consulted a few friends, and found that if I elected to go to either of these places, that would mean greater expense and a much longer stay in England than I was prepared for. A friend suggested that, if I really wanted to have the satisfaction of taking a difficult examination, I should pass the London Matriculation. It meant a good deal of labour and much addition to my stock of general knowledge, without any extra expense worth the name. I welcomed the suggestion. But the syllabus frightened me. Latin and a modern language were compulsory! How was I to manage Latin? But the friend entered a strong plea for it: 'Latin is very valuable to lawyers. Knowledge of Latin is very useful in understanding law books. And one paper in Roman Law is entirely in Latin. Besides, a knowledge of Latin means greater command over the English language.' It went home, and I decided to learn Latin, no matter how difficult it might be. French I had already begun, so I thought that should be the modern language. I joined a private Matriculation class. Examinations were held every six months, and I had only five months at my disposal. It was an almost impossible task for me. But the aspirant after being an English gentleman chose to convert himself into a serious student. I framed my own time-table to the minute; but neither my intelligence nor memory promised to enable me to tackle Latin and French besides other subjects within the given period. The result was that I was ploughed in Latin. I was sorry but did not lose heart. I had acquired a taste for Latin; also I thought my French would be all the better for another trial, and I would select a new subject in the science group. Chemistry, which was my subject in science, had no attraction for want of experiments, whereas it ought to have been a deeply interesting study. It was one of the compulsory subjects in India, and so I had selected it for the London Matriculation. This time, however, I chose Heat and Light instead of Chemistry. It was said to be easy and I found it to be so.

With my preparation for another trial, I made an effort to simplify my life still further. I felt that my way of living did not yet befit the modest means of my family. The thought of my struggling brother, who nobly responded to my regular calls for monetary help, deeply pained me. I saw that most of those who were spending from eight to fifteen

pounds monthly had the advantage of scholarships. I had before me examples of much simpler living. I came across a fair number of poor students living more humbly than I. One of them was staying in the slums in a room at two shillings a week and living on two pence worth of cocoa and bread per meal from Lockhart's cheap Cocoa Rooms. It was far from me to think of emulating him, but I felt I could surely have one room instead of two and cook some of my meals at home. That would be a saving of four to five pounds each month. I also came across books on simple living. I gave up the suite of rooms and rented one instead, invested in a stove, and began cooking my breakfast at home. The process scarcely took me more than twenty minutes for there was only oatmeal porridge to cook and water to boil for cocoa. I had lunch out and for dinner bread and coca at home. Thus I managed to live on a shilling and three pence a day. This was also a period of intensive study. Plain living saved me plenty of time, and I passed my examination.

Let not the reader think that this living made my life by any means a dreary affair. On the contrary, the change harmonized my inward and outward life. It was also more in keeping with the means of my family. My life was certainly more truthful and my soul knew no bounds of joy.

17. EXPERIMENTS IN DIETETICS

As I searched myself deeper, the necessity for changes both internal and external began to grow on me. As soon as, or even before, I made alterations in my expenses and my way of living, I began to make changes in my diet. I saw that the writers on vegetarianism had examined the question very minutely, attacking it in its religious, scientific, practical, and medial aspects. Ethically they had arrived at the conclusion that man's supremacy over the lower animals meant not that the former should prey upon the latter, but that the higher should protect the lower, and that there should be mutual aid between the two, as between man and man. They had also brought out the truth that man eats not for enjoyment but to live. And some of them accordingly suggested, and effected in their lives, abstention not only from flesh-meat but from eggs and milk. Scientifically some had concluded that man's physical structure showed that he was not meant to be a cooking but a frugivorous animal, that he could take only his mother's milk and, as soon as he had teeth, should begin to take solid foods. Medically they had suggested the rejection of all spices and condiments. According to the practical and economic argument, they had demonstrated that a vegetarian diet was the least expensive. All these

considerations had their effect on me, and I came across vegetarians of all these types in vegetarian restaurants. There was a Vegetarian Society in England with a weekly journal of its own. I subscribed to the weekly, joined the society, and very shortly found myself on the Executive Committee. Here I came in contact with those who were regarded as pillars of vegetarianism, and began my own experiments in dietetics.

I stopped taking the sweets and condiments I had got from home. The mind having taken a different turn, the fondness for condiments wore away, and I now relished the boiled spinach which in Richmond tasted insipid, cooked without condiments. Many such experiments taught me that the real seat of taste was not the tongue but the mind.

The economic consideration was of course constantly before me. There was in those days a body of opinion which regarded tea and coffee as harmful and favoured cocoa. And as I was convinced that one should eat only articles that sustained the body, I gave up tea and coffee as a rule, and substituted cocoa.

There were two divisions in the restaurants I used to visit. One division, which was patronized by fairly well-to-do people, provided any number of courses from which one chose and paid for *a la carte*, each dinner thus costing from one to two shillings. The other division produced six-penny dinners of three courses with a slice of bread. In my days of strict frugality I usually dined in the second division.

There were many minor experiments going on along with the main one; as for example, giving up starchy foods at one time, living on bread and fruit alone at another, and once living on cheese, milk, and eggs. This last experiment is worth noting. It lasted not even a fortnight. The reformer who advocated starchless food had spoken highly of eggs, and held that eggs were not meat. It was apparent that there was no injury done to living creatures in taking eggs. I was taken in by this plea, and took eggs in spite of my vow. But the lapse was momentary. I had no business to put a new interpretation on the vow. The interpretation of my mother who administered the vow was there for me. I knew that her definition of meat included eggs. And as soon as I saw the true import of the vow I gave up eggs and the experiment alike.

There is a nice point underlying the argument, and worth noting. I came across three definitions of meat in England. According to the first, meat denoted only the flesh of birds and beasts. Vegetarians who accepted that definition abjured the flesh of birds and beasts, but ate fish, not to mention eggs. According to the second definition, meat meant flesh of all living creatures. So fish was here out of the question, but eggs were

allowed. The third definition included under meat the flesh of living beings, as well as all their products, thus covering eggs and milk alike. If I accepted the first definition, I could take not only eggs, but fish also. But I was convinced that my mother's definition was the definition binding on me. If, therefore, I would observe the vow I had taken, I must abjure eggs. I therefore did so. This was a hardship, inasmuch as inquiry showed that even in vegetarian restaurants many courses used to contain eggs. This meant that unless I knew what was what, I had to go through the awkward process of ascertaining whether a particular course contained eggs or no, for many puddings and cakes were not free from them. But though the revelation of my duty caused this difficulty, it simplified my food. The simplification in its turn brought me annoyance, in that I had to give up several dishes I had come to relish. These difficulties were only passing, for the strict observance of the vow produced an inward relish distinctly more healthy, delicate, and permanent.

The real ordeal, however, was still to come, and that was in respect of the other vow. But who dare harm whom God protects?

A few observations about the interpretation of vows or pledges may not be out of place here. Interpretation of pledges has been a fruitful source of strife all the world over. No matter how explicit the pledge, people will turn and twist the text to suit their own purposes. They are to be met with among all classes of society, from the rich down to the poor, from the prince down to the peasant. Selfishness turns them blind, and by a use of the ambiguous middle they deceive themselves and seek to deceive the world and God. One golden rule is to accept the interpretation honestly put on the pledge by the party administering it. Another is to accept the interpretation of the weaker party, where there are two interpretations possible. Rejection of these two rules gives rise to strife and iniquity, which are rooted in untruthfulness. He who seeks truth alone easily follows the golden rule. He need not seek learned advice for interpretation. My mother's interpretation of meat was, according to the golden rule, the only true one for me, and not the one my wider experience or my pride of better knowledge might have taught me.

My experiments in England were conducted from the point of view of economy and hygiene. The religious aspect of the question was not considered until I went to South Africa, where I undertook strenuous experiments which will be narrated later. The seed, however, for all of them was sown in England.

A convert's enthusiasm for his new religion is greater than that of a

person who is born in it. Vegetarianism was then a new cult in England, and likewise for me, because, as we have seen, I had gone there a convinced meat-eater, and was intellectually converted to vegetarianism later. Full of the neophyte's zeal for vegetarianism, I decided to start a vegetarian club in my locality, Bayswater. I invited Sir Edwin Arnold, who lived there, to be Vice-President. Dr. Oldfield, who was Editor of *The Vegetarian*, became President. I myself became the Secretary. The club went well for a while, but came to an end in the course of a few months. For I left the locality, according to my custom of moving from place to place periodically. But this brief and modest experience gave me some little training in organizing and conducting institutions.

18. SHYNESS MY SHIELD

I was elected to the Executive Committee of the Vegetarian Society, and made it a point to attend every one of its meetings, but I always felt tongue-tied. Dr. Oldfield once said to me, 'You talk to me quite all right, but why is it that you never open your lips at a committee meeting? You are a drone.' I appreciated the banter. The bees are ever busy, the drone is a thorough idler. And it was not a little curious that whilst others expressed their opinions at these meetings, I sat quite silent. Not that I never felt tempted to speak. But I was at a loss to know how to express myself. All the rest of the members appeared to me to be better informed than I. Then it often happened that just when I had mustered up courage to speak, a fresh subject would be started. This went on for a long time.

Meantime a serious question came up for discussion. I thought it wrong to be absent, and felt it cowardice to register a silent vote. The discussion arose somewhat in this wise. The President of the Society was Mr. Hills, proprietor of the Thames Iron Works. He was a puritan. It may be said that the existence of the Society depended practically on his financial assistance. Many members of the Committee were more or less his proteges. Dr. Allinson of vegetarian fame was also a member of the Committee. He was an advocate of the then-new birth control movement, and preached its methods among the working classes. Mr. Hills regarded these methods as cutting at the root of morals. He thought that the Vegetarian Society had for its object not only dietetic but also moral reform, and that a man of Dr. Allinson's anti-puritanic views should not be allowed to remain in the Society. A motion was therefore brought for his removal. The question deeply interested me. I considered Dr. Allinson's views regarding artificial methods of birth control as dangerous, and I

believe that Mr. Hills was entitled, as a puritan, to oppose him. I had a high regard for Mr. Hills and his generosity. But I thought it was quite improper to exclude a man from a vegetarian society simply because he refused to regard puritan morals as one of the objects of the society. Mr. Hills' view regarding the exclusion of anti-puritans from the Society was personal to himself, and it had nothing to do with the declared object of the Society, which was simply the promotion of vegetarianism and not of any system of morality. I therefore held that any vegetarian could be a member of the Society, irrespective of his views on other morals.

There were in the Committee others also who shared my view, but I felt myself personally called upon to express my own. How to do it was the question. I had not the courage to speak, and I therefore decided to set down my thoughts in writing. I went to the meeting with the document in my pocket. So far as I recollect, I did not find myself equal even to reading it, and the President had it read by someone else. Dr. Allinson lost the day. Thus in the very first battle of the kind, I found myself siding with the losing party. But I had comfort in the thought that the cause was right. I have a faint recollection that after this incident, I resigned from the Committee.

This shyness I retained throughout my stay in England. Even when I paid a social call, the presence of half a dozen or more people would strike me dumb.

I once went to Ventnor with Sjt. Mazmudar. We stayed there with a vegetarian family. Mr. Howard, the author of *The Ethics of Diet*, was also staying at the same watering-place. We met him, and he invited us to speak at a meeting for the promotion of vegetarianism. I had ascertained that it was not considered incorrect to read one's speech. I knew that many did so to express themselves coherently and briefly. To speak *ex tempore* would have been out of the question for me. I had therefore written down my speech. I stood up to read it, but could not. My vision became blurred and I trembled, though the speech hardly covered a sheet of foolscap. Sjt. Mazmudar had to read it for me. His own speech was of course excellent and was received with applause. I was ashamed of myself and sad at heart for my incapacity.

My last effort to make a public speech in England was on the eve of my departure for home. But this time too I only succeeded in making myself ridiculous. I invited my vegetarian friends to dinner in the Holborn Restaurant referred to in these chapters. 'A vegetarian dinner could be had,' I said to myself, 'in vegetarian restaurants as a matter of course. But why should it not be possible in a non-vegetarain restaurant too?'

And I arranged with the manager of the Holborn Restaurant to provide a strictly vegetarian meal. The vegetarians hailed the new experiment with delight. All dinners are meant for enjoyment, but the West has developed the thing into an art. They are celebrated with great *eclat*, music and speeches. And the little dinner party that I gave was also not unaccompanied by some such display. Speeches, therefore, there had to be. When my turn for speaking came, I stood up to make a speech. I had with great care thought out one which would consist of a very few sentences. But I could not proceed beyond the first sentence. I had read of Addison that he began his maiden speech in the House of Commons, repeating 'I conceive' three times, and when he could proceed no further, a wag stood up and said, 'The gentleman conceived thrice but brought forth nothing.' I had thought of making a humorous speech taking this anecdote as the text. I therefore began with it and stuck there. My memory entirely failed me and in attempting a humorous speech I made myself ridiculous. 'I thank you, gentlemen, for having kindly responded to my invitation,' I said abruptly, and sat down.

It was only in South Africa that I got over this shyness, though I never completely overcame it. It was impossible for me to speak *impromptu*. I hesitated whenever I had to face strange audiences, and avoided making a speech whenever I could. Even today I do not think I could or would even be inclined to keep a meeting of friends engaged in idle talk.

I must say that, beyond occasionally exposing me to laughter, my constitutional shyness has been no disadvantage whatever. In fact I can see that, on the contrary, it has been all to my advantage. My hesitancy in speech, which was once an annoyance, is now a pleasure. Its greatest benefit has been that it has taught me the economy of words. I have naturally formed the habit of restraining my thoughts. And I can now give myself the certificate that a thoughtless word hardly ever escapes my tongue or pen. I do not recollect ever having had to regret anything in my speech or writing. I have thus been spared many a mishap and waste of time. Experience has taught me that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth, wittingly or unwittingly, is a natural weakness of man, and silence is necessary in order to surmount it. A man of few words will rarely be thoughtless in his speech; he will measure every word. We find so many people impatient to talk. There is no chairman of a meeting who is not pestered with notes for permission to speak. And whenever the permission is given, the speaker generally exceeds the time-limit, asks

for more time, and keeps on talking without permission. All this talking can hardly be said to be of any benefit to the world. It is so much waste of time. My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow. It has helped me in my discernment of truth.

19. THE CANKER OF UNTRUTH

There were comparatively few Indian students in England forty years ago. It was a practice with them to affect the bachelor even though they might be married. School or college students in England are all bachelors, studies being regarded as incompatible with married life. We had that tradition in the good old days, a student then being invariably known as a *brahmachari*.¹ But in these days we have child-marriages, a thing practically unknown in England. Indian youths in England, therefore, felt ashamed to confess that they were married. There was also another reason for dissembling, namely, that in the event of the fact being known it would be impossible for the young men to go about or flirt with the young girls of the family in which they lived. The flirting was more or less innocent. Parents even encouraged it; and that sort of association between young men and young women may even be a necessity there, in view of the fact that every young man has to choose his mate. If, however, Indian youths, on arrival in England, indulge in these relations quite natural to English youths, the result is likely to be disastrous, as has often been found. I saw that our youths had succumbed to the temptation and chosen a life of untruth for the sake of companionships which, however innocent in the case of English youths, were for them undesirable. I too caught the contagion. I did not hesitate to pass myself off as a bachelor, though I was married and the father of a son. But I was none the happier for being a dissembler. Only my reserve and my reticence saved me from going into deeper waters. If I did not talk, no girl would think it worth her while to enter into conversation with me or to go out with me.

My cowardice was on a par with my reserve. It was customary in families like the one in which I was staying at Ventnor for the daughter of the landlady to take out guests for a walk. My landlady's daughter took me one day to the lovely hills round Ventnor. I was no slow walker, but my companion walked even faster, dragging me after her and chattering away all the while. I responded to her chatter sometimes with a whispered

¹ One who observes *brahmacharya*, i.e., complete self-restraint. (See *Chapter 7, Note 2*.)

‘yes’ or ‘no’, or at the most ‘yes, how beautiful!’ She was flying like a bird, whilst I was wondering when I should get back home. We thus reached the top of a hill. How to get down again was the question. In spite of her high-heeled boots, this sprightly young lady of twenty-five darted down the hill like an arrow. I was shamefacedly struggling to get down. She stood at the foot smiling and cheering me, and offering to come and drag me. How could I be so chicken hearted? With the greatest difficulty, and crawling at intervals, I somehow managed to scramble to the bottom. She loudly laughed ‘bravo’ and shamed me all the more, as well she might.

But I could not escape scatheless everywhere. For God wanted to rid me of the canker of untruth. I once went to Brighton, another watering-place like Ventnor. This was before the Ventnor visit. I met there at a hotel an old widow of moderate means. This was my first year in England. The courses on the *menu* were all described in French, which I did not understand. I sat at the same table as the old lady. She saw that I was a stranger and puzzled, and immediately came to my aid. ‘You seem to be a stranger,’ she said, ‘and look perplexed. Why have you not ordered anything?’ I was spelling through the *menu* and preparing to ascertain the ingredients of the courses from the waiter, when the good lady thus intervened. I thanked her, and explaining my difficulty told her that I was at a loss to know which of the courses were vegetarian, as I did not understand French.

‘Let me help you,’ she said. ‘I shall explain the card to you and show you what you may eat.’ I gratefully availed myself of her help. This was the beginning of an acquaintance that ripened into friendship, and was kept up all through my stay in England and long after. She gave me her London address, and invited me to dine at her house every Sunday. On special occasions also she would invite me, help me to conquer my bashfulness, and introduce me to young ladies and draw me into conversation with them. Particularly marked out for these conversation was a young lady who stayed with her, and often we would be left entirely alone together.

I found all this very trying at first. I could not start a conversation, nor could I indulge in any jokes. But she put me in the way. I began to learn; and in course of time looked forward to every Sunday and came to like the conversations with the young friend.

The old lady went on spreading her net wider every day. She felt interested in our meetings. Possibly she had her own plans about us.

I was in a quandary. ‘How I wish I had told the good lady that I was

married!' I said to myself. 'She would then not have thought of an engagement between us. It is, however, never too late to mend. If I declare the truth, I might yet be saved more misery.' With these thoughts in my mind, I wrote a letter to her somewhat to this effect:

'Ever since we met at Brighton you have been kind to me. You have taken care of me even as a mother of her son. You also think that I should get married, and with that view you have been introducing me to young ladies. Rather than allow matters to go further, I must confess to you that I have been unworthy of your affection. I should have told you when I began my visits to you that I was married. I knew that Indian students in England dissembled the fact of their marriage, and I followed suit. I now see that I should not have done so. I must also add that I was married while yet a boy, and am the father of a son. I am pained that I should have kept this knowledge from you so long. But I am glad God has now given me the courage to speak out the truth. Will you forgive me? I assure you I have taken no improper liberties with the young lady you were good enough to introduce to me. I knew my limits. You, not knowing that I was married, naturally desired that we should be engaged. In order that things should not go beyond the present stage, I must tell you the truth.

'If on receipt of this, you feel that I have been unworthy of your hospitality, I assure you I shall not take it amiss. You have laid me under an everlasting debt of gratitude by your kindness and solicitude. If, after this, you do not reject me but continue to regard me as worthy of your hospitality, which I will spare no pains to deserve, I shall naturally be happy and count it a further token of your kindness.'

Let the reader know that I could not have written such a letter in a moment. I must have drafted and redrafted it many times over. But it lifted a burden that was weighing me down. Almost by return post came her reply somewhat as follows:

'I have your frank letter. We were both very glad and had a hearty laugh over it. The untruth you say you have been guilty of is pardonable. But it is well that you have acquainted us with the real state of things. My invitation still stands, and we shall certainly expect you next Sunday and look forward to hearing all about your child-marriage and to the pleasure of laughing at your expense. Need I assure you that our friendship is not in the least affected by this incident?'

I thus purged myself of the canker of untruth, and I never thenceforward hesitated to talk of my married state wherever necessary.

20. ACQUAINTANCE WITH RELIGIONS

Towards the end of my second year in England I came across two Theosophists, brothers, and both unmarried. They talked to me about the *Gita*. They were reading Sir Edwin Arnold's translation—*The Song Celestial*—and they invited me to read the original with them. I felt ashamed, as I had read the divine poem neither in Sanskrit nor in Gujarati. I was constrained to tell them that I had not read the *Gita*, but that I would gladly read it with them, and that though my knowledge of Sanskrit was meagre, still I hoped to be able to understand the original to the extent of telling where the translation failed to bring out the meaning. I began reading the *Gita* with them. The verses in the second chapter

If one

Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction; from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
Recklessness; then the memory—all betrayed—
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone

made a deep impression on my mind, and they still ring in my ears. The book struck me as one of priceless worth. The impression has ever since been growing on me, with the result that I regard it today as the book *par excellence* for the knowledge of Truth. It has afforded me invaluable help in my moments of gloom. I have read almost all the English translations of it, and I regard Sir Edwin Arnold's as the best. He has been faithful to the text, and yet it does not read like a translation. Though I read the *Gita* with these friends, I cannot pretend to have studied it then. It was only after some years that it became a book of daily reading.

The brothers also recommended *The Light of Asia* by Sir Edwin Arnold, whom I knew till then as the author only of *The Song Celestial*, and I read it with even greater interest than I did the *Bhagavadgita*. Once I had begun it I could not leave off. They also took me on one occasion to the Blavatsky Lodge and introduced me to Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant. The latter had just then joined the Theosophical Society, and I was following with great interest the controversy about her conversion. The friends advised me to join the Society, but I politely declined, saying, 'With my meagre knowledge of my own religion I do not want to belong to any religious body.' I recall having read, at the brothers' instance, Madame Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy*. This book stimulated in me the

desire to read books on Hinduism, and disabused me of the notion fostered by the missionaries that Hinduism was rife with superstition.

About the same time I met a good Christian from Manchester in a vegetarian boarding house. He talked to me about Christianity. I narrated to him my Rajkot recollections. He was pained to hear them. He said, 'I am a vegetarian. I do not drink. Many Christians are meat-eaters and drink, no doubt; but neither meat-eating nor drinking is enjoined by Scripture. Do please read the Bible.' I accepted his advice, and he got me a copy. I have a faint recollection that he himself used to sell copies of the Bible, and I purchased from him an edition containing maps, concordance, and other aids. I began reading it, but I could not possibly read through the Old Testament. I read the book of Genesis, and the chapters that followed invariably sent me to sleep. But just for the sake of being able to say that I had read it, I plodded through the other books with much difficulty, and without the least interest or understanding. I disliked reading the book of Numbers.

But the New Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount, which went straight to my heart. I compared it with the *Gita*. The verses 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloke too', delighted me beyond measure, and put me in mind of Shamal Bhatt's 'For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal' etc. My young mind tried to unify the teaching of the *Gita*, the *Light of Asia*, and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly.

This reading whetted my appetite for studying the lives of other religious teachers. A friend recommended Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. I read the chapter on the Hero as a Prophet, and learnt of the Prophet's greatness and bravery and austere living.

Beyond this acquaintance with religion I could not go at the moment, as reading for the examination left me scarcely any time for outside subjects. But I took mental note of the fact that I should read more religious books and acquaint myself with all the principal religions.

And how could I help knowing something of atheism too? Every Indian knew Bradlaugh's name and his so-called atheism. I read some book about it, the name of which I forget. It had no effect on me, for I had already crossed the Sahara of atheism. Mrs. Besant, who was then very much in the limelight, had turned to theism from atheism, and that fact

also strengthened my aversion to atheism. I had read her book *How I became a Theosophist*.

It was about this time that Bradlaugh died. He was buried in the Woking Cemetery. I attended the funeral, as I believe every Indian residing in London did. A few clergymen also were present to do him the last honours. On our way back from the funeral we had to wait at the station for our train. A champion atheist from the crowd heckled one of these clergymen. 'Well, sir, you believe in the existence of God?'

'I do,' said the good man in a low tone.

'You also agree that the circumference of the Earth is 28,000 miles, don't you?' said the atheist with a smile of self-assurance.

'Indeed.'

'Pray tell me then the size of your God and where he may be.'

'Well, if we but knew, He resides in the hearts of us both.'

'Now, now, don't take me to be a child,' said the champion with a triumphant look at us.

The clergyman assumed a humble silence.

This talk still further increased my prejudice against atheism.

21. 'NIRBAL KE BALA RAMA'¹

Though I had acquired a nodding acquaintance with Hinduism and other religions of the world, I should have known that it would not be enough to save me in my trials. Of the thing that sustains him through trials man has no inkling, much less knowledge, at the time. If an unbeliever, he will attribute his safety to chance. If a believer, he will say God saved him. He will conclude, as well he may, that his religious study or spiritual discipline was at the back of the state of grace within him. But in the hour of his deliverance he does not know whether his spiritual discipline or something else saves him. Who that has prided himself on his spiritual strength has not seen it humbled to the dust? A knowledge of religion, as distinguished from experience, seems but chaff in such moments of trial.

It was in England that I first discovered the futility of mere religious knowledge. How I was saved on previous occasions is more than I can say, for I was very young then; but now I was twenty and had gained some experience as husband and father.

1. 'Nirbal ke bala Rama'—Refrain of Surdas' famous hymn, 'He is the help of the helpless, the strength of the weak.'

During the last year, as far as I can remember, of my stay in England, that is in 1890, there was a Vegetarian Conference at Portsmouth to which an Indian friend and I were invited. Portsmouth is a sea-port with a large naval population. It has many houses with women of ill fame, women not actually prostitutes, but at the same time not very scrupulous about their morals. We were put up in one of these houses. Needless to say, the Reception Committee did not know anything about it. It would have been difficult in a town like Portsmouth to find out which were good lodgings and which were bad for occasional travellers like us.

We returned from the Conference in the evening. After dinner we sat down to play a rubber of bridge, in which our landlady joined, as is customary in England even in respectable households. Every player indulges in innocent jokes as a matter of course, but here my companion and our hostess began to make indecent ones as well. I did not know that my friend was an adept in the art. It captured me and I also joined in. Just when I was about to go beyond the limit, leaving the cards and the game to themselves, God through the good companion uttered the blessed warning: 'Whence this devil in you, my boy? Be off, quick!'

I was ashamed. I took the warning, and expressed within myself gratefulness to my friend. Remembering the vow I had taken before my mother, I fled from the scene. To my room I went quaking, trembling, and with beating heart, like a quarry escaped from its pursuer.

I recall this as the first occasion on which a woman, other than my wife, moved me to lust. I passed that night sleeplessly, all kinds of thoughts assailing me. Should I leave this house? Should I run away from the place? Where was I? What would happen to me if I had not my wits about me? I decided to act thenceforth with great caution; not to leave the house, but somehow leave Portsmouth. The Conference was not to go on for more than two days, and I remember I left Portsmouth the next evening, my companion staying there some time longer.

I did not then know the essence of religion or of God, and how He works in us. Only vaguely I understood that God had saved me on that occasion. On all occasions of trial He has saved me. I know that the phrase 'God saved me' has a deeper meaning for me today, and still I feel that I have not yet grasped its entire meaning. Only richer experience can help me to a fuller understanding. But in all my trials—of a spiritual nature, as a lawyer, in conducting institutions, and in politics—I can say that God saved me. When every hope is gone, 'when helpers fail and comforts flee,' I find that help arrives somehow, from I know not where. Supplication, worship, prayer are no superstition; they are acts more real

than the acts of eating, drinking, sitting, or walking. It is no exaggeration to say that they alone are real, all else is unreal.

Such worship or prayer is no flight of eloquence; it is no lip-homage. It springs from the heart. If, therefore, we achieve that purity of the heart when it is 'emptied of all but love,' if we keep all the chords in proper tune, they 'trembling pass in music out of sight.' Prayer needs no speech. It is in itself independent of any sensuous effort. I have not the slightest doubt that prayer is an unfailing means of cleansing the heart of passions. But it must be combined with the utmost humility.

22. NARAYAN HEMCHANDRA

Just about this time Narayan Hemchandra came to England. I had heard of him as a writer. We met at the house of Miss Manning of the National Indian Association. Miss Manning knew that I could not make myself sociable. When I went to her place I used to sit tongue-tied, never speaking except when spoken to. She introduced me to Narayan Hemchandra. He did not know English. His dress was queer—a clumsy pair of trousers, a wrinkled, dirty brown coat after the Parsi fashion, no necktie or collar, and a tasselled woollen cap. He grew a long beard.

He was lightly built and short of stature. His round face was scarred with small-pox, and had a nose which was neither pointed nor blunt. With his hand he was constantly turning over his beard.

Such a queer-looking and queerly dressed person was bound to be singled out in fashionable society.

'I have heard a good deal about you,' I said to him. 'I have also read some of your writings. I should be very pleased if you were kind enough to come to my place.'

Narayan Hemchandra had a rather hoarse voice. With a smile on his face he replied:

'Yes, where do you stay?'

'In Store Street.'

'Then we are neighbours. I want to learn English. Will you teach me?'

'I shall be happy to teach you anything I can, and will try my best. If you like, I will go to your place.'

'Oh, no. I shall come to you. I shall also bring with me a Translation Exercise Book.' So we made an appointment. Soon we were close friends.

Narayan Hemchandra was innocent of grammar. 'Horse' was a verb with him, and 'run' a noun. I remember many such funny instances. But

he was not to be baffled by his ignorance. My little knowledge of grammar could make no impression on him. Certainly he never regarded his ignorance of grammar as a matter for shame.

With perfect nonchalance he said: 'I have never been to school like you. I have never felt the need of grammar in expressing my thoughts. Well, do you know Bengali? I know it. I have travelled in Bengal. It is I who have given Maharshi Devendranath Tagore's works to the Gujarati-speaking world. And I wish to translate into Gujarati the treasures of many other languages. And you know I am never literal in my translations. I always content myself with bringing out the spirit. Others, with their better knowledge, may be able to do more in future. But I am quite satisfied with what I have achieved without the help of grammar. I know Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, and now I have begun to know English. What I want is a copious vocabulary. And do you think my ambition ends here? No fear. I want to go to France and learn French. I am told that language has an extensive literature. I shall go to Germany also, if possible, and there learn German.' And thus he would talk on unceasingly. He had a boundless ambition for learning languages and for foreign travel.

'Then you will go to America also?'

'Certainly. How can I return to India without having seen the New World?'

'But where will you find the money?'

'What do I need money for? I am not a fashionable fellow like you. The minimum amount of food and the minimum amount of clothing suffice for me. And for this what little I get out of my books and from my friends is enough. I always travel third class. While going to America also I shall travel on deck.'

Narayan Hemchandra's simplicity was all his own, and his frankness was on a par with it. Of pride he had not the slightest trace, excepting, of course, a rather undue regard for his own capacity as a writer.

We met daily. There was a considerable amount of similarity between our thoughts and actions. Both of us were vegetarians. We would often have our lunch together. This was the time when I lived on 17s. a week and cooked for myself. Sometimes I would go to his room, and sometimes he would come to mine. I cooked in the English style. Nothing but Indian style would satisfy him. He could not do without *dal*. I would make soup of carrots etc., and he would pity me for my taste. Once he somehow hunted out *mung*¹, cooked it, and brought it to my place. I ate it with delight. This led on to a regular system of exchange between us. I would take my delicacies to him and he would bring his to me.

Cardinal Manning's name was then on every lip. The dock labourers' strike had come to an early termination owing to the efforts of John Burns and Cardinal Manning. I told Narayan Hemchandra of Disraeli's tribute to the Cardinal's simplicity. 'Then I must see the sage,' said he.

'He is a big man. How do you expect to meet him?'

'Why? I know how. I must get you to write to him in my name. Tell him I am an author and that I want to congratulate him personally on his humanitarian work, and also say that I shall have to take you as interpreter as I do not know English.'

I wrote a letter to that effect. In two or three days came Cardinal Manning's card in reply giving us an appointment. So we both called on the Cardinal. I put on the usual visiting suit. Narayan Hemchandra was the same as ever, in the same coat and the same trousers. I tried to make fun of this, but he laughed me out and said:

'You civilized fellows are all cowards. Great men never look at a person's exterior. They think of his heart.'

We entered the Cardinal's mansion. As soon as we were seated, a thin, tall, old gentleman made his appearance, and shook hands with us. Narayan Hemchandra thus gave his greetings:

'I do not want to take up your time. I had heard a lot about you and I felt I should come and thank you for the good work you have done for the strikers. It has been my custom to visit the sages of the world, and that is why I have put you to this trouble.'

This was of course my translation of what he spoke in Gujarati.

'I am glad you have come. I hope your stay in London will agree with you and that you will get in touch with people here. God bless you.'

With these words the Cardinal stood up and said good-bye.

23. THE GREAT EXHIBITION

There was a great Exhibition at Paris in 1890. I had read about its elaborate preparations, and I also had a keen desire to see Paris. So I thought I had better combine two things in one, and go there at this juncture. A particular attraction of the Exhibition was the Eiffel Tower, constructed entirely of iron, and nearly 1,000 feet high. There were of course many other things of interest, but the Tower was the chief one, inasmuch as it had been supposed till then that a structure of that height could not safely stand.

I had heard of a vegetarian restaurant in Paris. I engaged a room there and stayed seven days. I managed everything very economically,

both the journey to Paris and the sight-seeing there. This I did mostly on foot and with the help of a map of Paris, as also a map of and guide to the Exhibition. These were enough to direct one to the main streets and chief places of interest.

I remember nothing of the Exhibition excepting its magnitude and variety. I have a fair recollection of the Eiffel Tower, as I ascended it twice or thrice. There was a restaurant on the first platform, and just for the satisfaction of being able to say that I had had my lunch at a great height, I threw away seven shillings on it.

The ancient churches of Paris are still in my memory. Their grandeur and their peacefulness are unforgettable. The wonderful construction of Notre Dame, and the elaborate decoration of the interior with its beautiful sculptures, cannot be forgotten. I felt then that those who expended millions on such divine cathedrals could not but have the love of God in their hearts.

I had read a lot about the fashions and frivolity of Paris. These were in evidence in every street, but the churches stood noticeably apart from these scenes. A man would forget the outside noise and bustle as soon as he entered one of these churches. His manner would change, he would behave with dignity and reverence as he passed someone kneeling before the image of the Virgin. The feeling I had then has since been growing on me, that all this kneeling and prayer could not be mere superstition; the devout souls kneeling before the Virgin could not be worshipping mere marble. They were fired with genuine devotion and they worshipped not stone, but the divinity of which it was symbolic. I have an impression that I felt then that by this worship they were not detracting from, but increasing, the glory of God.

I must say a word about the Eiffel Tower. I do not know what purpose it serves today. But I then heard it greatly disparaged as well as praised. I remember that Tolstoy was the chief among those who disparaged it. He said that the Eiffel Tower was a monument of man's folly, not of his wisdom. Tobacco, he argued, was the worst of all intoxicants, inasmuch as a man addicted to it was tempted to commit crimes which a drunkard never dared to do; liquor made a man mad, but tobacco clouded his intellect and made him build castles in the air. The Eiffel Tower was one of the creations of a man under such influence. There is no art about the Eiffel Tower. In no way can it be said to have contributed to the real beauty of the Exhibition. Men flocked to see it and ascended it, as it was a novelty and of unique dimensions. It was the toy of the Exhibition. So long as we are children we are attracted by toys, and the Tower was a

good demonstration of the fact that we are all children attracted by trinkets. That may be claimed to be the purpose served by the Eiffel Tower.

24. 'CALLED' —BUT THEN?

I have deferred saying anything up to now about the purpose for which I went to England, viz., being called to the bar. It is time to advert to it briefly.

There were two conditions which had to be fulfilled before a student was formally called to the bar: 'keeping terms', twelve terms equivalent to about three years; and passing examinations. 'Keeping terms' meant eating one's terms, i.e., attending at least six out of about twenty-four dinners in a term. Eating did not mean actually partaking of the dinner, it meant reporting oneself at the fixed hours and remaining present throughout the dinner. Usually of course everyone ate and drank the good commons and choice wines provided. A dinner cost from two and six to three and six, that is from two to three rupees. This was considered moderate, inasmuch as one had to pay that same amount for wines alone if one dined at a hotel. To us in India it is a matter for surprise, if we are not 'civilized', that the cost of drink should exceed the cost of food. The first revelation gave me a great shock, and I wondered how people had the heart to throw away so much money on drink. Later I came to understand. I often ate nothing at these dinners, for the things that I might eat were only bread, boiled potato, and cabbage. In the beginning I did not eat these, as I did not like them; and later, when I began to relish them, I also gained the courage to ask for other dishes.

The dinner provided for the benchers used to be better than that for the students. A Parsi student, who was also a vegetarian, and I applied, in the interests of vegetarianism, for the vegetarian courses which were served to the benchers. The application was granted, and we began to get fruits and other vegetables from the benchers' table.

Two bottles of wine were allowed to each group of four, and as I did not touch them, I was ever in demand to form a quartet, so that three might empty two bottles. And there was a 'grand night' in each term when extra wines, like champagne, in addition to port and sherry, were served. I was therefore specially requested to attend and was in great demand on that grand night.

I could not see then, nor have I seen since, how these dinners qualified the students better for the bar. There was once a time when only a few students used to attend these dinners, and thus there were opportunities

for talks between them and the benchers, and speeches were also made. These occasions helped to give them knowledge of the world, with a sort of polish and refinement, and also improved their power of speaking. No such thing was possible in my time, as the benchers had a table all to themselves. The institution had gradually lost all its meaning, but conservative England retained it nevertheless.

The curriculum of study was easy, barristers being humorously known as 'dinner barristers'. Everyone knew that the examinations had practically no value. In my time there were two, one in Roman Law and the other in Common Law. There were regular text-books prescribed for these examinations, which could be taken in compartments, but scarcely anyone read them. I have known many to pass the Roman Law examination by scrambling through notes on Roman Law in a couple of weeks, and the Common Law examination by reading notes on the subject in two or three months. Question papers were easy and examiners were generous. The percentage of passes in the Roman Law examination used to be 95 to 99 and of those in the final examination 75 or even more. There was thus little fear of being plucked, and examinations were held not once but four times in the year. They could not be felt as a difficulty.

But I succeeded in turning them into one. I felt that I should read all the text-books. It was a fraud, I thought, not to read these books. I invested much money in them. I decided to read Roman Law in Latin. The Latin which I had acquired in the London Matriculation stood me in good stead. And all this reading was not without its value later on in South Africa, where Roman Dutch is the common law. The reading of Justinian, therefore, helped me a great deal in understanding the South African law.

It took me nine months of fairly hard labour to read through the Common Law of England. For Broom's *Common Law*, a big but interesting volume, took up a good deal of time. Snell's *Equity* was full of interest, but a bit hard to understand. White and Tudor's *Leading Cases*, from which certain cases were prescribed, was full of interest and instruction. I read also with interest Williams' and Edward's *Real Property* and Goodeve's *Personal Property*. Williams' book read like a novel. The one book I remember to have read, on my return to India, with the same unflagging interest, was Mayne's *Hindu Law*. But it is out of place to talk here of Indian law books.

I passed my examinations, was called to the bar on the 10th of June 1891, and enrolled in the High Court on the 11th. On the 12th I sailed for home.

But notwithstanding my study, there was no end to my helplessness and fear. I did not feel myself qualified to practise law.

But a separate chapter is needed to describe this helplessness of mine.

25. MY HELPLESSNESS

It was easy to be called, but it was difficult to practise at the bar. I had read the laws, but not learnt how to practise law. I had read with interest 'Legal Maxims', but did not know how to apply them in my profession. '*Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*' (Use your property in such a way as not to damage that of others) was one of them, but I was at a loss to know how one could employ this maxim for the benefit of one's client. I had read all the leading cases on this maxim, but they gave me no confidence in the application of it in the practice of law.

Besides, I had learnt nothing at all of Indian Law. I had not the slightest idea of Hindu and Mahomedan Law. I had not even learnt how to draft a plaint, and felt completely at sea. I had heard of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta as one who roared like a lion in law courts. How, I wondered, could he have learnt the art in England? It was out of the question for me ever to acquire his legal acumen, but I had serious misgivings as to whether I should be able even to earn a living by the profession.

I was torn with these doubts and anxieties whilst I was studying law. I confided my difficulties to some of my friends. One of them suggested that I should seek Dadabhai Naoroji's advice. I have already said that when I went to England, I possessed a note of introduction to Dadabhai. I availed myself of it very late. I thought I had no right to trouble such a great man for an interview. Whenever an address by him was announced, I would attend it, listen to him from a corner of the hall, and go away after having feasted my eyes and ears. In order to come in close touch with the students, he had founded an association. I used to attend its meetings, and rejoiced at Dadabhai's solicitude for the students, and the latter's respect for him. In course of time I mustered up courage to present to him the note of introduction. He said: 'You can come and have my advice whenever you like.' But I never availed myself of his offer. I thought it wrong to trouble him without the most pressing necessity. Therefore I dared not venture to accept my friend's advice to submit my difficulties to Dadabhai at that time. I forget now whether it was the same friend or someone else who recommended me to meet Mr. Frederick Pincutt. He was a Conservative, but his affection for Indian students was pure and unselfish. Many students sought his advice, and I also applied to him for an

appointment, which he granted. I can never forget that interview. He greeted me as a friend. He laughed away my pessimism. 'Do you think,' he said, 'that everyone must be a Pherozechah Mehta? Pherozechahs and Badruddins are rare. Rest assured it takes no unusual skill to be an ordinary lawyer. Common honesty and industry are enough to enable him to make a living. All cases are not complicated. Well, let me know the extent of your general reading.'

When I acquainted him with my little stock of reading, he was, as I could see, rather disappointed. But it was only for a moment. Soon his face beamed with a pleasing smile and he said, 'I understand your trouble. Your general reading is meagre. You have no knowledge of the world, a *sine qua non* for a vakil. You have not even read the history of India. A vakil should know human nature. He should be able to read a man's character from his face. And every Indian ought to know Indian History. This has no connection with the practice of law, but you ought to have that knowledge. I see that you have not even read Kaye's and Malleon's history of the Mutiny of 1857. Get hold of that at once, and also read two more books to understand human nature.' These were Lavator's and Shemmelpennick's books on physiognomy.

I was extremely grateful to this venerable friend. In his presence I found all my fear gone, but as soon as I left him I began to worry again. 'To know a man from his face' was the question that haunted me, as I thought of the two books on my way home. The next day I purchased Lavator's book. Shemmelpennick's was not available at the shop. I read Lavator's book and found it more difficult than Snell's *Equity*, and scarcely interesting. I studied Shakespeare's physiognomy, but did not acquire the knack of finding out the Shakespeares walking up and down the streets of London.

Lavator's book did not add to my knowledge. Mr. Pincutt's advice did me very little direct service, but his kindness stood me in good stead. His smiling open face stayed in my memory, and I trusted his advice that Pherozechah Mehta's acumen, memory and ability were not essential to the making of a successful lawyer; honesty and industry were enough. And as I had a fair share of these last, I felt somewhat reassured.

I could not read Kaye's and Malleon's volumes in England, but I did so in South Africa, as I had made a point of reading them at the first opportunity.

Thus with just a little leaven of hope mixed with my despair, I landed at Bombay from S.S. *Assam*. The sea was rough in the harbour, and I had to reach the quay in a launch.

PART TWO

1. RAYCHANDBHAI

I said in the last chapter that the sea was rough in Bombay harbour, not an unusual thing in the Arabian Sea in June and July. It had been choppy all the way from Aden. Almost every passenger was sick; I alone was in perfect form, staying on deck to see the stormy surge, and enjoying the splash of the waves. At breakfast there would be just one or two people besides myself, eating their oatmeal porridge from plates carefully held in their laps, lest the porridge itself find its place there.

The outer storm was to me a symbol of the inner. But even as the former left me unperturbed, I think I can say the same thing about the latter. There was the trouble with the caste that was to confront me. I have already adverted to my helplessness in starting on my profession. And then, as I was a reformer, I was taxing myself as to how best to begin certain reforms. But there was even more in store for me than I knew.

My elder brother had come to meet me at the dock. He had already made the acquaintance of Dr. Mehta and his elder brother, and as Dr. Mehta insisted on putting me up at his house, we went there. Thus the acquaintance begun in England continued in India, and ripened into a permanent friendship between the two families.

I was pining to see my mother. I did not know that she was no more in the flesh to receive me back into her bosom. The sad news was now given me, and I underwent the usual ablution. My brother had kept me ignorant of her death, which took place whilst I was still in England. He wanted to spare me the blow in a foreign land. The news, however, was none the less a severe shock to me. But I must not dwell upon it. My grief was even greater than over my father's death. Most of my cherished hopes were shattered. But I remember that I did not give myself up to any wild expression of grief. I could even check the tears, and took to life just as though nothing had happened.

Dr. Mehta introduced me to several friends, one of them being his brother Shri Revashankar Jagjivan, with whom there grew up a lifelong friendship. But the introduction that I need particularly take note of was the one to the poet Raychand or Rajchandra, the son-in-law of an elder brother of Dr. Mehta, and partner of the firm of jewellers conducted in the name of Revashankar Jagjivan. He was not above twenty-five then, but my first meeting with him convinced me that he was a man of great character and learning. He was also known as *Shatavadhani* (one having the faculty of remembering or attending to a hundred things simultaneously), and Dr. Mehta recommended me to see some of his memory feats. I exhausted my vocabulary of all the European tongues I knew, and asked the poet to repeat the words. He did so in the precise order in which I had given them. I envied his gift without, however, coming under its spell. The thing that did cast its spell over me I came to know afterwards. This was his wide knowledge of the scriptures, his spotless character, and his burning passion for self-realization. I saw later that this last was the only thing for which he lived. The following lines of Muktanand were always on his lips and engraved on the tablets of his heart:

I shall think myself blessed only when I see Him
in every one of my daily acts;
Verily He is the thread
which supports Muktanand's life.

Raychandbhai's commercial transactions covered hundreds of thousands. He was a connoisseur of pearls and diamonds. No knotty business problem was too difficult for him. But all these things were not the centre round which his life revolved. That centre was the passion to see God face to face. Amongst the things on his business table there were invariably to be found some religious book and his diary. The moment he finished his business he opened the religious book or the diary. Much of his published writings is a reproduction from this diary. The man who immediately on finishing his talk about weighty business transactions, began to write about the hidden things of the spirit, could evidently not be a businessman at all, but a real seeker after Truth. And I saw him thus absorbed in godly pursuits in the midst of business, not once or twice, but very often. I never saw him lose his state of equipoise. There was no business or other selfish tie that bound him to me, and yet I enjoyed the closest association with him. I was but a briefless barrister then, and yet whenever I saw him he would engage me in conversation of a seriously religious nature. Though I was then groping, and could not be said to

have any serious interest in religious discussion, still I found his talk of absorbing interest. I have since met many a religious leader or teacher. I have tried to meet the heads of various faiths, and I must say that no one else has ever made on me the impression that Raychandbhai did. His words went straight home to me. His intellect compelled as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness, and deep down in me was the conviction that he would never willingly lead me astray, and would always confide to me his innermost thoughts. In my moments of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge.

And yet in spite of this regard for him, I could not enthrone him in my heart as my Guru. The throne has remained vacant and my search still continues.

I believe in the Hindu theory of Guru and his importance in spiritual realization. I think there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a Guru. An imperfect teacher may be tolerable in mundane matters, but not in spiritual matters. Only a perfect *gnani*¹ deserves to be enthroned as Guru. There must, therefore, be ceaseless striving after perfection. For one gets the Guru that one deserves. Infinite striving after perfection is one's right. It is its own reward. The rest is in the hands of God.

Thus, though I could not place Raychandbhai on the throne of my heart as Guru, we shall see how he was, on many occasions, my guide and helper. Three moderns have left a deep impress on my life, and captivated me: Raychandbhai by his living contact; Tolstoy by his book, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*; and Ruskin by his *Unto this Last*. But of these more in their proper place.

2. HOW I BEGAN LIFE

My elder brother had built high hopes on me. The desire for wealth and name and fame was great in him. He had a big heart, generous to a fault. This, combined with his simple nature, had attracted to him many friends, and through them he expected to get me briefs. He had also assumed that I should have a swinging practice and had, in that expectation, allowed the household expenses to become top-heavy. He had also left no stone unturned in preparing the field for my practice.

The storm in my caste over my foreign voyage was still brewing. It had divided the caste into two camps, one of which immediately readmitted

1. A knowing one, a seer.

me, while the other was bent on keeping me out. To please the former my brother took me to Nasik before going to Rajkot, gave me a bath in the sacred river, and on reaching Rajkot gave a caste dinner. I did not like all this. But my brother's love for me was boundless, and my devotion to him was in proportion to it, and so I mechanically acted as he wished, taking his will to be law. The trouble about readmission to the caste was thus practically over.

I never tried to seek admission to the section that had refused it. Nor did I feel even mental resentment against any of the headmen of that section. Some of these regarded me with dislike, but I scrupulously avoided hurting their feelings. I fully respected the caste regulations about excommunication. According to these, none of my relations, including my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and even my sister and brother-in-law, could entertain me; and I would not so much as drink water at their houses. They were prepared secretly to evade the prohibition, but it went against the grain with me to do a thing in secret that I would not do in public.

The result of my scrupulous conduct was that I never had occasion to be troubled by the caste; nay, I have experienced nothing but affection and generosity from the general body of the section that still regards me as excommunicated. They have even helped me in my work, without ever expecting me to do anything for the caste. It is my conviction that all these good things are due to my non-resistance. Had I agitated for being admitted to the caste, had I attempted to divide it into more camps, had I provoked the caste-men, they would surely have retaliated; and instead of steering clear of the storm, I should, on arrival from England, have found myself in a whirlpool of agitation, and perhaps a party to dissimulation.

My relations with my wife were still not as I desired. Even my stay in England had not cured me of jealousy. I continued my squeamishness and suspiciousness in respect of every little thing, and hence all my cherished desires remained unfulfilled. I had decided that my wife should learn reading and writing, and that I should help her in her studies, but my lust came in the way and she had to suffer for my own shortcoming. Once I went the length of sending her away to her father's house, and consented to receive her back only after I had made her thoroughly miserable. I saw later that all this was pure folly on my part.

I had planned reform in the education of children. My brother had children, and my own child which I had left at home when I went to England was now a boy of nearly four. It was my desire to teach these

little ones physical exercise and make them hardy, and also to give them the benefit of my personal guidance. In this I had my brother's support, and I succeeded in my efforts more or less. I very much liked the company of children, and the habit of playing and joking with them has stayed with me till today. I have ever since thought that I should make a good teacher of children.

The necessity for food 'reform' was obvious. Tea and coffee had already found their place in the house. My brother had thought it fit to keep some sort of English atmosphere ready for me on my return, and to that end crockery and other such things, which used to be kept in the house only for special occasions, were now in general use. My 'reforms' put the finishing touch. I introduced oatmeal porridge, and cocoa was to replace tea and coffee. But in truth it became an addition to tea and coffee. Boots and shoes were already there. I completed the Europeanization by adding the European dress.

Expenses thus went up. New things were added every day. We had succeeded in tying a white elephant at our door. But how was the wherewithal to be found? To start practice in Rajkot would have meant sure ridicule. I had hardly the knowledge of a qualified vakil, and yet I expected to be paid ten times his fee! No client would be fool enough to engage me. And even if such a one was to be found, should I add arrogance and fraud to my ignorance, and increase the burden of debt I owed to the world?

Friends advised me to go to Bombay for some time in order to gain experience of the High Court, to study Indian law, and to try to get what briefs I could. I took up the suggestion, and went.

In Bombay I started a household with a cook as incompetent as myself. He was a Brahman. I did not treat him as a servant, but as a member of the household. He would pour water over himself but never wash. His *dhoti* was dirty, as also his sacred thread, and he was completely innocent of the scriptures. But how was I to get a better cook?

'Well, Ravishankar' (for that was his name), I would ask him, 'you may not know cooking, but surely you must know your *sandhya* (daily worship), etc.'

'*Sandhya*, sir! The plough is our *sandhya*, and the spade our daily ritual. That is the type of Brahman I am. I must live on your mercy. Otherwise agriculture is of course there for me.'

So I had to be Ravishankar's teacher. Time I had enough. I began to do half the cooking myself, and introduced the English experiments in vegetarian cookery. I invested in a stove, and with Ravishankar began to

run the kitchen. I had no scruples about interdining, Ravishankar too came to have none, and so we went on merrily together. There was only one obstacle. Ravishankar had sworn to remain dirty and to keep the food unclean!

But it was impossible for me to get along in Bombay for more than four or five months, there being no income to square with the ever-increasing expenditure.

This was how I began life. I found the barrister's profession a bad job—²much show and little knowledge. I felt a crushing sense of my responsibility.

3. THE FIRST CASE

Whilst in Bombay I began on the one hand, my study of Indian law, and on the other, my experiments in dietetics, in which Virchand Gandhi, a friend, joined me. My brother, for his part, was trying his best to get me briefs.

The study of Indian law was a tedious business. The Civil Procedure Code I could in no way get on with. Not so, however, with the Evidence Act. Virchand Gandhi was reading for the solicitor's examination, and would tell me all sorts of stories about barristers and vakils. 'Sir Pherozechah's ability,' he would say, 'lies in his profound knowledge of law. He has the Evidence Act by heart, and knows all the cases on the thirty-second section. Badruddin Tyabji's wonderful power of argument inspires the judges with awe.'

The stories of stalwarts such as these would unnerve me.

'It is not unusual,' he would add, 'for a barrister to vegetate for five or seven years. That's why I have signed the articles for solicitorship. You should count yourself lucky if you can paddle your own canoe in three years' time.'

Expenses were mounting up every month. To have a barrister's board outside the house, whilst still preparing for the barrister's profession inside, was a thing to which I could not reconcile myself. Hence I could not give undivided attention to my studies. I developed some liking for the Evidence Act, and read Mayne's *Hindu Law* with deep interest, but I had not the courage to conduct a case. I was helpless beyond words, even as the bride come fresh to her father-in-law's house!

About this time, I took up the case of one Mamibai. It was a 'small cause'. 'You will have to pay some commission to the tout,' I was told. I emphatically declined.

‘But even that great criminal lawyer Mr. So-and-So, who makes three to four thousand a month, pays commission!’

‘I do not need to emulate him,’ I rejoined. ‘I should be content with Rs. 300 a month. Father did not get more.’

‘But those days are gone. Expenses in Bombay have gone up frightfully. You must be businesslike.’

I was adamant. I gave no commission, but got Mamibai’s case all the same. It was an easy case. I charged Rs. 30 for my fees. The case was not likely to last longer than a day.

This was my *debut* in the Small Causes Court. I appeared for the defendant and had thus to cross-examine the plaintiff’s witnesses. I stood up, but my heart sank into my boots. My head was reeling, and I felt as though the whole court was doing likewise. I could think of no question to ask. The judge must have laughed, and the vakils no doubt enjoyed the spectacle. But I was past seeing anything. I sat down and told the agent that I could not conduct the case, that he had better engage Patel and have the fee back from me. Mr Patel was duly engaged for Rs. 51. To him, of course, the case was child’s play.

I hastened from the Court, not knowing whether my client won or lost her case, but I was ashamed of myself, and decided not to take up any more cases until I had courage enough to conduct them. Indeed I did not go to Court again until I went to South Africa. There was no virtue in my decision. I had simply made a virtue of necessity. There would be no one so foolish as to entrust his case to me, only to lose it!

But there *was* another case in store for me at Bombay. It was a memorial to be drafted. A poor Mussalman’s land was confiscated in Porbandar. He approached me as the worthy son of a worthy father. His case appeared to be weak, but I consented to draft a memorial for him, the cost of printing to be borne by him. I drafted it and read it out to friends. They approved of it, and that to some extent made me feel confident that I was qualified enough to draft a memorial, as indeed I really was.

My business could flourish if I drafted memorials without any fees. But that would bring no grist to the mill. So I thought I might take up a teacher’s job. My knowledge of English was good enough, and I should have loved to teach English to Matriculation boys in some school. In this way I could have met part at least of the expenses. I came across an advertisement in the papers: ‘Wanted, an English teacher to teach one hour daily. Salary Rs 75.’ The advertisement was from a famous high school. I applied for the post and was called for an interview. I went there

in high spirits, but when the principal found that I was not a graduate, he regretfully refused me.

‘But I have passed the London Matriculation with Latin as my second language.’

‘True, but we want a graduate.’

There was no help for it. I wrung my hands in despair. My brother also felt much worried. We both came to the conclusion that it was no use spending more time in Bombay. I should settle in Rajkot where my brother, himself a petty pleader, could give me some work in the shape of drafting applications and memorials. And then as there was already a household at Rajkot, the breaking up of the one at Bombay meant a considerable saving. I liked the suggestion. My little establishment was thus closed after a stay of six months in Bombay.

I used to attend High Court daily whilst in Bombay, but I cannot say that I learnt anything there. I had not sufficient knowledge to learn much. Often I could not follow the cases, and dozed off. There were others also who kept me company in this, and thus lightened my load of shame. After a time, I even lost the sense of shame, as I learnt to think that it was fashionable to doze in the High Court.

If the present generation has also its briefless barristers like me in Bombay, I would commend them a little practical precept about living. Although I lived in Girgaum, I hardly ever took a carriage or a tramcar. I had made it a rule to walk to the High Court. It took me quite forty-five minutes, and of course I invariably returned home on foot. I had inured myself to the heat of the sun. This walk to and from the Court saved a fair amount of money, and when many of my friends in Bombay used to fall ill, I do not remember having once had an illness. Even when I began to earn money, I kept up the practice of walking to and from the office, and I am reaping the benefits of that practice.

4. THE FIRST SHOCK

Disappointed, I left Bombay and went to Rajkot, where I set up my own office. Here I got along moderately well. Drafting applications and memorials brought me in, on the average, Rs. 300 a month. For this work I had to thank influence rather than my own ability, for my brother's partner had a settled practice. All applications etc. which were, really or to his mind, of an important character, he sent to big barristers. To my lot fell the applications to be drafted on behalf of his poor clients.

I must confess that here I had to compromise the principle of giving no commission, which in Bombay I had so scrupulously observed. I was told that conditions in the two cases were different; that whilst in Bombay commissions had to be paid to touts, here they had to be paid to vakils who briefed you; and that here as in Bombay all barristers, without exception, paid a percentage of their fees as commission. The argument of my brother was, for me, unanswerable. 'You see,' said he, 'that I am in partnership with another vakil. I shall always be inclined to make over to you all our cases with which you can possibly deal, and if you refuse to pay a commission to my partner, you are sure to embarrass me. As you and I have a joint establishment, your fee comes to our common purse, and I automatically get a share. But what about my partner? Supposing he gave the same case to some other barrister, he would certainly get his commission from him.' I was taken in by this plea, and felt that if I was to practise as a barrister, I could not press my principle regarding commissions in such cases. That is how I argued with myself, or to put it bluntly, how I deceived myself. Let me add, however, that I do not remember ever to have given commission in respect of any other case.

Though I thus began to make both ends meet, I got the first shock of my life about this time. I had heard what a British officer was like, but up to now had never been face to face with one.

My brother had been secretary and adviser to the late Ranasaheb of Porbandar before he was installed on his *gadi*,¹ and hanging over his head at this time was the charge of having given wrong advice when in that office. The matter had gone to the Political Agent, who was prejudiced against my brother. Now I had known this officer when in England, and he may be said to have been fairly friendly to me. My brother thought that I should avail myself of the friendship and, putting in a good word on his behalf, try to disabuse the Political Agent of his prejudice. I did not at all like this idea. I should not, I thought, try to take advantage of a trifling acquaintance in England. If my brother was really at fault, what use was my recommendation? If he was innocent, he should submit a petition in the proper course and, confident of his innocence, face the result. My brother did not relish this advice. 'You do not know Kathiawad,' he said, 'and you have yet to know the world. Only influence counts here. It is not proper for you, a brother, to shirk your duty, when you can clearly put in a good word about me to an officer you know.'

I could not refuse him, so I went to the officer much against my will. I knew I had no right to approach him, and was fully conscious that I was

1. Throne.

compromising my self-respect. But I sought an appointment and got it. I reminded him of the old acquaintance, but I immediately saw that Kathiawad was different from England; that an officer on leave was not the same as an officer on duty. The Political Agent owned the acquaintance, but the reminder seemed to stiffen him. 'Surely you have not come here to abuse that acquaintance, have you?' appeared to be the meaning of that stiffness, and seemed to be written on his brow. Nevertheless I opened my case. The *sahib* was impatient. 'Your brother is an intriguer. I want to hear nothing more from you. I have no time. If your brother has anything to say, let him apply through the proper channel.' The answer was enough, was perhaps deserved. But selfishness is blind. I went on with my story. The *sahib* got up and said: 'You must go now.'

'But please hear me out,' said I. That made him more angry. He called his peon and ordered him to show me the door. I was still hesitating when the peon came in, placed his hands on my shoulders, and put me out of the room.

The *sahib* went away, as also the peon, and I departed, fretting and fuming. I at once wrote out and sent over a note to this effect:

'You have insulted me. You have assaulted me through your peon. If you make no amends, I shall have to proceed against you.'

Quick came the answer through his *sowar*:

'You were rude to me. I asked you to go and you would not. I had no option but to order my peon to show you the door. Even after he asked you to leave the office, you did not do so. He therefore had to use just enough force to send you out. You are at liberty to proceed as you wish.'

With this answer in my pocket, I came home crestfallen, and told my brother all that had happened. He was grieved, but was at a loss as to how to console me. He spoke to his vakil friends. For I did not know how to proceed against the *sahib*. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta happened to be in Rajkot at this time, having come down from Bombay for some case. But how could a junior barrister like me dare to see him? So I sent him the papers of my case, through the vakil who had engaged him, and begged for his advice. 'Tell Gandhi,' he said, 'such things are the common experience of many vakils and barristers. He is still fresh from England, and hot-blooded. He does not know British officers. If he would earn something and have an easy time here, let him tear up the note and pocket the insult. He will gain nothing by proceeding against the *sahib*, and on the contrary will very likely ruin himself. Tell him he has yet to know life.'

The advice was as bitter as poison to me, but I had to swallow it. I pocketed the insult, but also profited by it. 'Never again shall I place myself in such a false position, never again shall I try to exploit friendship in this way,' said I to myself, and since then I have never been guilty of a breach of that determination. This shock changed the course of my life.

5. PREPARING FOR SOUTH AFRICA

I was no doubt at fault in having gone to that officer. But his impatience and overbearing anger were out of all proportion to my mistake. It did not warrant expulsion. I can scarcely have taken up more than five minutes of his time. But he simply could not endure my talking. He could have politely asked me to go, but power had intoxicated him to an inordinate extent. Later I came to know that patience was not one of the virtues of this officer. It was usual for him to insult visitors. The slightest unpleasantness was sure to put the *sahib* out.

Now most of my work would naturally be in his court. It was beyond me to conciliate him. I had no desire to curry favour with him. Indeed, having once threatened to proceed against him, I did not like to remain silent.

Meanwhile, I began to learn something of the petty politics of the country. Kathiawad, being a conglomeration of small states, naturally had its rich crop of politicals. Petty intrigues between states, and intrigues of officers for power, were the order of the day. Princes were always at the mercy of others, and ready to lend their ears to sycophants. Even the *sahib's* peon had to be cajoled, and the *sahib's shirastedar* was more than his master, as he was his eyes, his ears, and his interpreter. The *shirastedar's* will was law, and his income was always reputed to be more than the *sahib's*. This may have been an exaggeration, but he certainly lived beyond his salary.

This atmosphere appeared to me to be poisonous, and how to remain unscathed was a perpetual problem for me.

I was thoroughly depressed, and my brother clearly saw it. We both felt that if I could secure some job, I should be free from this atmosphere of intrigue. But without intrigue, a ministership or judgeship was out of the question. And the quarrel with the *sahib* stood in the way of my practice.

Porbandar was then under administration, and I had some work there in the shape of securing more powers for the prince. Also I had to see the Administrator in respect of the heavy *vighoti* (land rent) exacted from

the Mers. This officer, though an Indian, was, I found, one better than the *sahib* in arrogance. He was able, but the ryots appeared to me to be none the better off for his ability. I succeeded in securing a few more powers for the Rana, but hardly any relief for the Mers. It struck me that their cause was not even carefully gone into.

So even in this mission I was comparatively disappointed. I thought justice was not done to my clients, but I had not the means to secure it. At the most I could have appealed to the Political Agent or to the Governor, who would have dismissed the appeal, saying, 'We decline to interfere.' If there had been any rule or regulation governing such decisions, it would have been something, but here the *sahib's* will was law.

I was exasperated.

In the meantime a Meman firm from Porbandar wrote to my brother making the following offer: 'We have business in South Africa. Ours is a big firm, and we have a big case there in the Court, our claim being £40,000. It has been going on for a long time. We have engaged the services of the best vakils and barristers. If you sent your brother there, he would be useful to us and also to himself. He would be able to instruct our counsel better than ourselves. And he would have the advantage of seeing a new part of the world, and of making new acquaintances.'

My brother discussed the proposition with me. I could not clearly make out whether I had simply to instruct the counsel or to appear in court. But I was tempted.

My brother introduced me to the late Sheth Abdul Karim Jhaveri, a partner of Dada Abdulla & Co., the firm in question. 'It won't be a difficult job,' the Sheth assured me. 'We have big Europeans as our friends, whose acquaintance you will make. You can be useful to us in our shop. Much of our correspondence is in English, and you can help us with that too. You will, of course, be our guest, and hence will have no expense whatever.'

'How long do you require my services?' I asked. 'And what will be the payment?'

'Not more than a year. We will pay you a first class return fare and a sum of £105, all found.'

This was hardly going there as a barrister. It was going as a servant of the firm. But I wanted somehow to leave India. There was also the tempting opportunity of seeing a new country, and of having new experience. Also I could send £105 to my brother and help in the expenses of the household. I closed with the offer without any haggling, and got ready to go to South Africa.

6. ARRIVAL IN NATAL

When starting for South Africa, I did not feel the wrench of separation which I had experienced when leaving for England. My mother was now no more. I had gained some knowledge of the world and of travel abroad, and going from Rajkot to Bombay was no unusual affair.

This time I only felt the pang of parting with my wife. Another baby had been born to us since my return from England. Our love could not yet be called free from lust, but it was getting gradually purer. Since my return from Europe, we had lived very little together; and as I had now become her teacher, however indifferent, and helped her to make certain reforms, we both felt the necessity of being more together, if only to continue reforms. But the attraction of South Africa rendered the separation bearable. 'We are bound to meet again in a year,' I said to her, by way of consolation, and left Rajkot for Bombay.

Here I was to get my passage through the agent of Dada Abdulla and Co. But no berth was available on the boat, and if I did not sail then, I should be stranded in Bombay. 'We have tried our best,' said the agent, 'to secure a first-class passage, but in vain--unless you are prepared to go on deck. Your meals can be arranged for in the saloon.' Those were the days of my first class travelling, and how could a barrister travel as a deck passenger? So I refused the offer. I suspected the agent's veracity, for I could not believe that a first class passage was not available. With the agent's consent I set about securing it myself. I went on board the boat and met the chief officer. He said to me quite frankly, 'We do not usually have such a rush. But as the Governor-General of Mozambique is going by this boat, all the berths are engaged.'

'Could you not possibly squeeze me in?' I asked.

He surveyed me from top to toe and smiled. 'There is just one way,' he said. 'There is an extra berth in my cabin, which is ususally not available for passengers. But I am prepared to give it to you.' I thanked him, and got the agent to purchase the passage. In April 1893 I set forth full of zest to try my luck in South Africa.

The first port of call was Lamu, which we reached in about thirteen days. The Captain and I had become great friends by this time. He was fond of playing chess, but as he was quite a novice, he wanted one still more of a beginner for his partner, and so he invited me. I had heard a lot about the game but had never tried my hand at it. Players used to say that this was a game in which there was plenty of scope for the exercise of one's intelligence. The Captain offered to give me lessons, and he found me a good pupil, as I had unlimited patience. Every time I was the loser,

and that made him all the more eager to teach me. I liked the game, but never carried my liking beyond the boat, or my knowledge beyond the moves of the pieces.

At Lamu the ship remained at anchor for some three to four hours, and I landed to see the port. The Captain had also gone ashore, but he had warned me that the harbour was treacherous and that I should return in good time.

It was a very small place. I went to the Post Office and was delighted to see the Indian clerks there, and had a talk with them. I also saw the Africans and tried to acquaint myself with their ways of life, which interested me very much. This took up some time.

There were some deck passengers with whom I had made acquaintance, and who had landed with a view to cooking their food on shore and having a quiet meal. I now found them preparing to return to the steamer, so we all got into the same boat. The tide was high in the harbour, and our boat had more than its proper load. The high current was so strong that it was impossible to hold the boat to the ladder of the steamer. It would just touch the ladder and be drawn away again by the current. The first whistle to start had already gone. I was worried. The Captain was witnessing our plight from the bridge. He ordered the steamer to wait an extra five minutes. There was another boat near the ship which a friend hired for me for ten rupees. This boat picked me up from the overloaded one. The ladder had already been raised. I had therefore to be drawn up by means of a rope and the steamer started immediately. The other passengers were left behind. I now appreciated the Captain's warning.

After Lamu the next port was Mombasa and then Zanzibar. The halt here was a long one--eight or ten days--and we then changed to another boat.

The Captain liked me much, but the liking took an undesirable turn. He invited an English friend and me to accompany him on an outing, and we all went ashore in his boat. I had not the least notion of what the outing meant. And little did the Captain know what an ignoramus I was in such matters. We were taken to some Negro women's quarters by a tout. We were each shown into a room. I simply stood there dumb with shame. Heaven only knows what the poor woman must have thought of me. When the Captain called me I came out just as I had gone in. He saw my innocence. At first I felt very much ashamed, but as I could not think of the thing except with horror, the sense of shame wore away, and I thanked God that the sight of the woman had not moved me in the least.

I was disgusted at my weakness, and pitied myself for not having had the courage to refuse to go into the room.

This in my life was the third trial of its kind. Many a youth, innocent at first, must have been drawn into sin by a false sense of shame. I could claim no credit for having come out unscathed. I could have credit if I had refused to enter that room. I must entirely thank the All-merciful for having saved me. The incident increased my faith in God and taught me, to a certain extent, to cast off false shame.

As we had to remain in this port for a week, I took rooms in the town and saw a good deal by wandering about the neighbourhood. Only Malabar can give any idea of the luxuriant vegetation of Zanzibar. I was amazed at the gigantic trees and the size of the fruits.

The next call was at Mozambique, and thence we reached Natal towards the close of May.

7. SOME EXPERIENCES

The port of Natal is Durban, also known as Port Natal. Abdulla Sheth was there to receive me. As the ship arrived at the quay and I watched the people coming on board to meet their friends, I observed that the Indians were not held in much respect. I could not fail to notice a sort of snobbishness about the manner in which those who knew Abdulla Sheth behaved towards him, and it stung me. Abdulla Sheth had got used to it. Those who looked at me did so with a certain amount of curiosity. My dress marked me out from other Indians. I had a frock-coat and a turban, an imitation of the Bengal *pugree*.

I was taken to the firm's quarters and shown into the room set apart for me, next to Abdulla Sheth's. He did not understand me. I could not understand him. He read the papers his brother had sent through me, and felt more puzzled. He thought his brother had sent him a white elephant. My style of dress and living struck him as being expensive like that of the Europeans. There was no particular work then which could be given me. Their case was going on in the Transvaal. There was no meaning in sending me there immediately. And how far could he trust my ability and honesty? He would not be in Pretoria to watch me. The defendants were in Pretoria, and for aught he knew they might bring undue influence to bear on me. And if work in connection with the case in question was not to be entrusted to me, what work could I be given to do, as all other work could be done much better by his clerks? The clerks could be brought to book, if they did wrong. Could I be, if I also happened to err? So if no work in

connection with the case could be given me, I should have to be kept for nothing.

Abdulla Sheth was practically unlettered, but he had a rich fund of experience. He had an acute intellect and was conscious of it. By practice he had picked up just sufficient English for conversational purposes, but that served him for carrying on all his business, whether it was dealing with Bank Managers and European merchants or explaining his case to his counsel. The Indians held him in very high esteem. His firm was then the biggest, or at any rate one of the biggest, of the Indian firms. With all these advantages he had one disadvantage—he was by nature suspicious.

He was proud of Islam and loved to discourse on Islamic philosophy. Though he did not know Arabic, his acquaintance with the Holy Qur'an and Islamic literature in general was fairly good. Illustrations he had in plenty, always ready at hand. Contact with him gave me a fair amount of practical knowledge of Islam. When we came closer to each other, we had long discussions on religious topics.

On the second or third day of my arrival, he took me to see the Durban court. There he introduced me to several people, and seated me next to his attorney. The magistrate kept staring at me, and finally asked me to take off my turban. This I refused to do, and left the court.

So here too there was fighting in store for me.

Abdulla Sheth explained to me why some Indians were required to take off their turbans. Those wearing the Musalman costume might, he said, keep their turbans on, but the other Indians on entering a court had to take theirs off as a rule.

I must enter into some details to make this nice distinction intelligible. In the course of these two or three days I could see that the Indians were divided into different groups. One was that of Musalman merchants, who would call themselves 'Arabs'. Another was that of Hindu, and yet another of Parsi, clerks. The Hindu clerks were neither here nor there, unless they cast in their lot with the 'Arabs'. The Parsi clerks would call themselves Persians. These three classes had some social relations with one another. But by far the largest class was that composed of Tamil, Telugu, and North Indian indentured and freed labourers. The indentured labourers were those who went to Natal on an agreement to serve for five years, and came to be known there as *girmityas* from *girmit*, which was the corrupt form of the English word 'agreement'. The other three classes had none but business relations with this class. Englishmen called them 'coolies', and as the majority of Indians belonged to the labouring class, all Indians were called 'coolies,' or '*samis*'. *Sami* is a Tamil suffix

occurring after many Tamil names, and it is nothing else than the Sanskrit *Swami*, meaning a master. Whenever, therefore, an Indian resented being addressed as a *sami* and had enough wit in him, he would try to return the compliment in this wise: 'You may call me *sami*, but you forget that *sami* means a master. I am not your master!' Some Englishmen would wince at this, while others would get angry, swear at the Indian, and if there was a chance, would even belabour him; for '*sami*' to him was nothing better than a term of contempt. To interpret it to mean a master amounted to an insult!

I was hence known as a 'coolie barrister'. The merchants were known as 'coolie merchants'. The original meaning of the word 'coolie' was thus forgotten, and it became a common appellation for all Indians. The Musalman merchant would resent this and say: 'I am not a coolie. I am an Arab,' or 'I am a merchant,' and the Englishman, if courteous, would apologize to him.

The question of wearing the turban had a great importance in this state of things. Being obliged to take off one's Indian turban would be pocketing an insult. So I thought I had better bid good-bye to the Indian turban and begin wearing an English hat, which would save me from the insult and the unpleasant controversy.

But Abdulla Sheth disapproved of the idea. He said, 'If you do anything of the kind, it will have a very bad effect. You will compromise those insisting on wearing Indian turbans. And an Indian turban sits well on your head. If you wear an English hat, you will pass for a waiter.'

There was practical wisdom, patriotism, and a little bit of narrowness in this advice. The wisdom was apparent, and he would not have insisted on the Indian turban except out of patriotism; the slighting reference to the waiter betrayed a kind of narrowness. Amongst the indentured Indians there were three classes—Hindus, Musalmans, and Christians. The last were the children of indentured Indians who became converts to Christianity. Even in 1893 their number was large. They wore the English costume, and the majority of them earned their living by service as waiters in hotels. Abdulla Sheth's criticism of the English hat was with reference to this class. It was considered degrading to serve as a waiter in a hotel. The belief persists even today among many.

On the whole I liked Abdulla Sheth's advice. I wrote to the press about the incident and defended the wearing of my turban in the court. The question was very much discussed in the papers, which described me as an 'unwelcome visitor'. Thus the incident gave me an unexpected

advertisement in South Africa within a few days of my arrival there. Some supported me, while others severely criticized my temerity.

My turban stayed with me practically until the end of my stay in South Africa. When and why I left off wearing any head-dress at all in South Africa, we shall see later.

8. ON THE WAY TO PRETORIA

I soon came in contact with the Christian Indians living in Durban. The Court Interpreter, Mr. Paul, was a Roman Catholic. I made his acquaintance, as also that of the late Mr. Subhan Godfrey, then a teacher under the Protestant Mission, and father of Mr. James Godfrey, who as a member of the South African Deputation visited India in 1924. I likewise met the late Parsi Rustomji and the late Adamji Miyakhan about the same time. All these friends, who up to then had never met one another except on business, came ultimately into close contact, as we shall see later.

Whilst I was thus widening the circle of my acquaintance, the firm received a letter from their lawyer saying that preparations should be made for the case, and that Abdulla Sheth should go to Pretoria himself or send a representative.

Abdulla Sheth gave me this letter to read, and asked me if I would go to Pretoria. 'I can only say after I have understood the case from you,' said I. 'At present I am at a loss to know what I have to do there.' He thereupon asked his clerks to explain the case to me.

As I began to study the case, I felt as though I ought to begin from the A B C of the subject. During the few days I had had at Zanzibar, I had been to the court to see the work there. A Parsi lawyer was examining a witness and asking him questions regarding credit and debit entries in account books. It was all Greek to me. Book-keeping I had learnt neither at school nor during my stay in England. And the case for which I had come to South Africa was mainly about accounts. Only one who knew accounts could understand and explain it. The clerk went on talking about this debited and that credited, and I felt more and more confused. I did not know what a P. Note meant. I failed to find the word in the dictionary. I revealed my ignorance to the clerk, and learnt from him that a P. Note meant a promissory note. I purchased a book on book-keeping and studied it. That gave me some confidence. I understood the case. I saw that Abdulla Sheth, who did not know how to keep accounts, had so much practical knowledge that he could quickly solve intricacies of book-keeping. I told him that I was prepared to go to Pretoria.

‘Where will you put up?’ asked the Sheth.

‘Wherever you want me to,’ said I.

‘Then I shall write to our lawyer. He will arrange for your lodgings. I shall also write to my Meman friends there, but I would not advise you to stay with them. The other party has great influence in Pretoria. Should any one of them manage to read our private correspondence, it might do us much harm. The more you avoid familiarity with them, the better for us.’

‘I shall stay where your lawyer puts me up, or I shall find out independent lodgings. Pray don’t worry. Not a soul shall know anything that is confidential between us. But I do intend cultivating the acquaintance of the other party. I should like to be friends with them. I would try, if possible, to settle the case out of court. After all, Tyeb Sheth is a relative of yours.’

Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan Muhammad was a near relative of Abdulla Sheth.

The mention of a probable settlement somewhat startled the Sheth, I could see. But I had already been six or seven days in Durban, and we now knew and understood each other. I was no longer a ‘white elephant’. So he said:

‘Y. . . es, I see. There would be nothing better than a settlement out of court. But we are all relatives and know one another very well indeed. Tyeb Sheth is not a man to consent to a settlement easily. With the slightest unweariness on our part, he would screw all sorts of things out of us, and do us down in the end. So please think twice before you do anything.’

‘Don’t be anxious about that,’ said I. ‘I need not talk to Tyeb Sheth, or for that matter to anyone else, about the case. I would only suggest to him to come to an understanding, and so save a lot of unnecessary litigation.’

On the seventh or eighth day after my arrival, I left Durban. A first class seat was booked for me. It was usual there to pay five shillings extra, if one needed a bedding. Abdulla Sheth insisted that I should book one bedding but, out of obstinacy and pride and with a view to saving five shillings, I declined. Abdulla Sheth warned me. ‘Look, now,’ said he ‘this is a different country from India. Thank God, we have enough and to spare. Please do not stint yourself in anything that you may need.’

I thanked him and asked him not to be anxious.

The train reached Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, at about 9 p.m. Beddings used to be provided at this station. A railway servant came and asked me if I wanted one. ‘No,’ said I, ‘I have one with me.’ He went

away. But a passenger came next, and looked me up and down. He saw that I was a 'coloured' man. This disturbed him. Out he went and came in again with one or two officials. They all kept quiet, when another official came to me and said, 'Come along, you must go to the van compartment.'

'But I have a first class ticket,' said I.

'That doesn't matter,' rejoined the other. 'I tell you, you must go to the van compartment.'

'I tell you, I was permitted to travel in this compartment at Durban, and I insist on going on in it.'

'No, you won't,' said the official. 'You must leave this compartment, or else I shall have to call a police constable to push you out.'

'Yes, you may. I refuse to get out voluntarily.'

The constable came. He took me by the hand and pushed me out. My luggage was also taken out. I refused to go to the other compartment and the train steamed away. I went and sat in the waiting room, keeping my hand-bag with me, and leaving the other luggage where it was. The railway authorities had taken charge of it.

It was winter, and winter in the higher regions of South Africa is severely cold. Maritzburg being at a high altitude, the cold was extremely bitter. My over-coat was in my luggage, but I did not dare to ask for it lest I should be insulted again, so I sat and shivered. There was no light in the room. A passenger came in at about midnight and possibly wanted to talk to me. But I was in no mood to talk.

I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights, or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial—only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice.

So I decided to take the next available train to Pretoria.

The following morning I sent a long telegram to the General Manager of the Railway and also informed Abdulla Sheth, who immediately met the General Manager. The Manager justified the conduct of the railway authorities, but informed him that he had already instructed the Station Master to see that I reached my destination safely. Abdulla Sheth wired to the Indian merchants in Maritzburg and to friends in other places to meet me and look after me. The merchants came to see me at the station and tried to comfort me by narrating their own hardships and explaining

that what had happened to me was nothing unusual. They also said that Indians travelling first or second class had to expect trouble from railway officials and white passengers. The day was thus spent in listening to these tales of woe. The evening train arrived. There was a reserved berth for me. I now purchased at Maritzburg the bedding ticket I had refused to book at Durban.

The train took me to Charlestown.

9. MORE HARDSHIPS

The train reached Charlestown in the morning. There was no railway, in those days, between Charlestown and Johannesburg, but only a stage-coach, which halted at Standerton for the night *en route*. I possessed a ticket for the coach, which was not cancelled by the break of the journey at Maritzburg for a day; besides, Abdulla Sheth had sent a wire to the coach agent at Charlestown.

But the agent only needed a pretext for putting me off, and so, when he discovered me to be a stranger, he said, 'Your ticket is cancelled.' I gave him the proper reply. The reason at the back of his mind was not want of accommodation, but quite another. Passengers had to be accommodated inside the coach, but as I was regarded as a 'coolie' and looked a stranger, it would be proper, thought the 'leader', as the white man in charge of the coach was called, not to seat me with the white passengers. There were seats on either side of the coachbox. The leader sat on one of these as a rule. Today he sat inside and gave me his seat. I knew it was sheer injustice and an insult, but I thought it better to pocket it. I could not have forced myself inside, and if I had raised a protest, the coach would have gone off without me. This would have meant the loss of another day, and Heaven only knows what would have happened the next day. So, much as I fretted within myself, I prudently sat next to the coachman.

At about three o'clock the coach reached Pardekoph. Now the leader desired to sit where I was seated, as he wanted to smoke and possibly to have some fresh air. So he took a piece of dirty sack-cloth from the driver, spread it on the footboard and, addressing me, said, '*Sami*, you sit on this, I want to sit near the driver.' The insult was more than I could bear. In fear and trembling I said to him, 'It was you who seated me here, though I should have been accommodated inside. I put up with the insult. Now that you want to sit outside and smoke, you would have me sit at your feet. I will not do so, but I am prepared to sit inside.'

As I was struggling through these sentences, the man came down upon me and began heavily to box my ears. He seized me by the arm and tried to drag me down. I clung to the brass rails of the coachbox and was determined to keep my hold even at the risk of breaking my wristbones. The passengers were witnessing the scene—the man swearing at me, dragging and belabouring me, and I remaining still. He was strong and I was weak. Some of the passengers were moved to pity and exclaimed: ‘Man, let him alone. Don’t beat him. He is not to blame. He is right. If he can’t stay there, let him come and sit with us.’ ‘No fear,’ cried the man, but he seemed somewhat crestfallen and stopped beating me. He let go my arm, swore at me a little more, and asking the Hottentot servant who was sitting on the other side of the coachbox to sit on the footboard, took the seat so vacated.

The passengers took their seats and, the whistle given, the coach rattled away. My heart was beating fast within my breast and I was wondering whether I should ever reach my destination alive. The man cast an angry look at me now and then and, pointing his finger at me, growled: ‘Take care, let me once get to Standerton and I shall show you what I do.’ I sat speechless and prayed to God to help me.

After dark we reached Standerton and I heaved a sigh of relief on seeing some Indian faces. As soon as I got down, these friends said: ‘We are here to receive you and take you to Isa Sheth’s shop. We have had a telegram from Dada Abdulla.’ I was very glad, and we went to Sheth Isa Haji Sumar’s shop. The Sheth and his clerks gathered round me. I told them all that I had gone through. They were very sorry to hear it and comforted me by relating to me their own bitter experiences.

I wanted to inform the agent of the Coach Company of the whole affair. So I wrote him a letter, narrating everything that had happened, and drawing his attention to the threat his man had held out. I also asked for an assurance that he would accommodate me with the other passengers inside the coach when we started the next morning. To which the agent replied to this effect: ‘From Standerton we have a bigger coach with different men in charge. The man complained of will not be there tomorrow, and you will have a seat with the other passengers.’ This somewhat relieved me. I had, of course, no intention of proceeding against the man who had assaulted me, and so the chapter of the assault closed there.

In the morning Isa Sheth’s man took me to the coach, I got a good seat and reached Johannesburg quite safely that night.

Standerton is a small village and Johannesburg a big city. Abdulla Sheth had wired to Johannesburg also, and given me the name and address of Muhammad Kasam Kamruddin's firm there. Their man had come to receive me at the stage, but neither did I see him nor did he recognize me. So I decided to go to a hotel. I knew the names of several. Taking a cab I asked to be driven to the Grand National Hotel. I saw the manager and asked for a room. He eyed me for a moment, and politely saying, 'I am very sorry, we are full up,' bade me good-bye. So I asked the cabman to drive to Muhammad Kasam Kamruddin's shop. Here I found Abdul Gani Sheth expecting me, and he gave me a cordial greeting. He had a hearty laugh over the story of my experience at the hotel. 'How ever did you expect to be admitted to a hotel?' he said.

'Why not?' I asked.

'You will come to know after you have stayed here a few days.' said he. 'Only we can live in a land like this, because, for making money, we do not mind pocketing insults, and here we are.' With this he narrated to me the story of the hardships of Indians in South Africa.

Of Sheth Abdul Gani we shall know more as we proceed.

He said: 'This country is not for men like you. Look now, you have to go to Pretoria tomorrow. You will *haveto* travel third class. Conditions in the Transvaal are worse than in Natal. First and second class tickets are never issued to Indians.'

'You cannot have made persistent efforts in this direction.'

'We have sent representations, but I confess our own men too do not want as a rule to travel first or second.'

I sent for the railway regulations and read them. There was a loophole. The language of the old Transvaal enactments was not very exact or precise; that of the railway regulations was even less so.

I said to the Sheth: 'I wish to go first class, and if I cannot, I shall prefer to take a cab to Pretoria, a matter of only thirty-seven miles.'

Sheth Abdul Gani drew my attention to the extra time and money this would mean, but agreed to my proposal to travel first, and accordingly we sent a note to the Station Master. I mentioned in my note that I was a barrister and that I always travelled first. I also stated in the letter that I needed to reach Pretoria as early as possible, that as there was no time to await his reply I would receive it in person at the station, and that I should expect to get a first class ticket. There was of course a purpose behind asking for the reply in person. I thought that if the station master gave a written reply, he would certainly say 'no', especially because he would have his own notion of a 'coolie' barrister. I would therefore appear before

him in faultless English dress, talk to him and possibly persuade him to issue a first class ticket. So I went to the station in a frock-coat and necktie, placed a sovereign for my fare on the counter, and asked for a first class ticket.

‘You sent me that note?’ he asked.

‘That is so. I shall be much obliged if you will give me a ticket. I must reach Pretoria today.’

He smiled and, moved to pity, said: ‘I am not a Transvaaler. I am a Hollander. I appreciate your feelings, and you have my sympathy. I do want to give you a ticket—on one condition, however, that, if the guard should ask you to shift to the third class, you will not involve me in the affair, by which I mean that you should not proceed against the Railway Company. I wish you a safe journey. I can see you are a gentleman.’

With these words he booked the ticket. I thanked him and gave him the necessary assurance.

Sheth Abdul Gani had come to see me off at the station. The incident gave him an agreeable surprise, but he warned me, saying: ‘I shall be thankful if you reach Pretoria all right. I am afraid the guard will not leave you in peace in the first class, and even if he does, the passengers will not.’

I took my seat in a first class compartment, and the train started. At Germiston the guard came to examine the tickets. He was angry to find me there, and signalled to me with his finger to go to the third class. I showed him my first class ticket. ‘That doesn’t matter,’ said he, ‘remove to the third class.’

There was only one English passenger in the compartment. He took the guard to task. ‘What do you mean by troubling the gentleman?’ he said. ‘Don’t you see he has a first class ticket? I do not mind in the least his travelling with me.’ Addressing me, he said, ‘You should make yourself comfortable where you are.’

The guard muttered: ‘If you want to travel with a coolie, what do I care?’ and went away.

At about eight o’clock in the evening the train reached Pretoria.

10. FIRST DAY IN PRETORIA

I had expected someone on behalf of Dada Abdulla’s attorney to meet me at Pretoria station. I knew that no Indian would be there to receive me, since I had particularly promised not to put up at an Indian house. But the attorney had sent no one. I understood later that as I had arrived

on a Sunday, he could not have sent anyone without inconvenience. I was perplexed, and wondered where to go, as I feared that no hotel would accept me.

Pretoria station in 1893 was quite different from what it was in 1914. The lights were burning dimly. The travellers were few. I let all the other passengers go and thought that as soon as the ticket collector was fairly free, I would hand him my ticket and ask him if he could direct me to some small hotel or any other such place where I might go; otherwise I would spend the night at the station. I must confess I shrank from asking him even this, for I was afraid of being insulted.

The station became clear of all passengers. I gave my ticket to the ticket collector and began my enquiries. He replied to me courteously, but I saw that he could not be of any considerable help. But an American Negro who was standing near by broke into the conversation.

‘I see,’ said he, ‘that you are an utter stranger here, without any friends. If you will come with me, I will take you to a small hotel, of which the proprietor is an American who is very well known to me. I think he will accept you.’

I had my own doubts about the offer, but I thanked him and accepted his suggestion. He took me to Johnston’s Family Hotel. He drew Mr. Johnston aside to speak to him, and the latter agreed to accommodate me for the night, on condition that I should have my dinner served in my room.

‘I assure you,’ said he, ‘that I have no colour prejudice. But I have only European custom, and, if I allowed you to eat in the dinning room, my guests might be offended and even go away.’

‘Thank you’, said I, ‘even for accommodating me for the night, I am now more or less acquainted with the conditions here, and I understand your difficulty. I do not mind you serving the dinner in my room. I hope to be able to make some other arrangement tomorrow.’

I was shown into a room, where I now sat waiting for the dinner and musing, as I was quite alone. There were not many guests in the hotel, and I had expected the waiter to come very shortly with the dinner. Instead Mr. Johnston appeared. He said: ‘I was ashamed of having asked you to have your dinner here. So I spoke to the other guests about you, and asked them if they would mind your having your dinner in the dining-room. They said that they had no objection, and that they did not mind your staying here as long as you liked. Please, therefore, come to the dinning-room, if you will, and stay here as long as you wish.’

I thanked him again, went to the dining room and had a hearty dinner.

Next morning I called on the attorney, Mr. A. W. Baker. Abdulla Sheth had given me some description of him, so his cordial reception did not surprise me. He received me very warmly and made kind inquiries. I explained all about myself. Thereupon he said: 'We have no work for you here as barrister, for we have engaged the best counsel. The case is a prolonged and complicated one, so I shall take your assistance only to the extent of getting necessary information. And of course you will make communication with my client easy for me, as I shall now ask for all the information I want from him through you. That is certainly an advantage. I have not yet found rooms for you. I thought I had better do so after having seen you. There is a fearful amount of colour prejudice here, and therefore it is not easy to find lodgings for such as you. But I know a poor woman. She is the wife of a baker. I think she will take you, and thus add to her income at the same time. Come, let us go to her place.'

So he took me to her house. He spoke with her privately about me, and she agreed to accept me as a boarder at 35 shillings a week.

Mr. Baker, besides being an attorney, was a staunch lay preacher. He is still alive and now engaged purely in missionary work, having given up the legal profession. He is quite well-to-do. He still corresponds with me. In his letters he always dwells on the same theme. He upholds the excellence of Christianity from various points of view, and contends that it is impossible to find eternal peace unless one accepts Jesus as the only son of God and the Saviour of mankind.

During the very first interview Mr. Baker ascertained my religious views. I said to him: 'I am a Hindu by birth. And yet I do not know much of Hinduism, and I know less of other religions. In fact I do not know where I am, and what is and what should be my belief. I intend to make a careful study of my own religion and, as far as I can, of other religions as well.'

Mr. Baker was glad to hear all this, and said: 'I am one of the directors of the South Africa General Mission. I have built a church at my own expense, and deliver sermons in it regularly. I am free from colour prejudice. I have some co-workers, and we meet at one o'clock every day for a few minutes and pray for peace and light. I shall be glad if you will join us there. I shall introduce you to my co-workers, who will be happy to meet you, and I dare say you will also like their company. I shall give you, besides, some religious books to read, though of course the book of books is the Holy Bible, which I would specially recommend to you.'

I thanked Mr. Baker and agreed to attend the one o'clock prayers as regularly as possible.

'So I shall expect you here tomorrow at one o'clock, and we shall go together to pray,' added Mr. Baker, and we said good-bye.

I had little time for reflection just yet.

I went to Mr. Johnston, paid the bill, and removed to the new lodgings, where I had my lunch. The landlady was a good woman. She had cooked a vegetarian meal for me. It was not long before I made myself quite at home with the family.

I next went to see the friend to whom Dada Abdulla had given me a note. From him I learnt more about the hardships of Indians in South Africa. He insisted that I should stay with him. I thanked him, and told him that I had already made arrangements. He urged me not to hesitate to ask for anything I needed.

It was now dark. I returned home, had my dinner, went to my room, and lay there absorbed in deep thought. There was not any immediate work for me. I informed Abdulla Sheth of it. What, I thought, can be the meaning of Mr. Baker's interest in me? What shall I gain from his religious co-workers? How far should I undertake the study of Christianity? How was I to obtain literature about Hinduism? And how was I to understand Christianity in its proper perspective without thoroughly knowing my own religion? I could come to only one conclusion: I should make a dispassionate study of all that came to me, and deal with Mr. Baker's group as God might guide me; I should not think of embracing another religion before I had fully understood my own.

Thus musing I fell asleep.

11. CHRISTIAN CONTACTS

The next day at one o'clock I went to Mr. Baker's prayer-meeting. There I was introduced to Miss Harris, Miss Gabb, Mr. Coates, and others. Everyone kneeled down to pray, and I followed suit. The prayers were supplications to God for various things, according to each person's desire. Thus the usual forms were for the day to be passed peacefully, or for God to open the doors of the heart.

A prayer was now added for my welfare: 'Lord, show the path to the new brother who has come amongst us. Give him, Lord, the peace that Thou has given us. May the Lord Jesus who has saved us save him too. We ask all this in the name of Jesus.' There was no singing of hymns or other music at these meetings. After the supplication for something special

every day, we dispersed, each going to his lunch, that being the hour for it. The prayer did not take more than five minutes.

The Misses Harris and Gabb were both elderly maiden ladies. Mr. Coates was a Quaker. The two ladies lived together, and they gave me a standing invitation to four o'clock tea at their house every Sunday.

When we met on Sundays, I used to give Mr. Coates my religious diary for the week, and discuss with him the books I had read and the impression they had left on me. The ladies used to narrate their sweet experiences and talk about the peace they had found.

Mr. Coates was a frank-hearted staunch young man. We went out for walks together, and he also took me to other Christian friends.

As we came closer to each other, he began to give me books of his own choice, until my shelf was filled with them. He loaded me with books, as it were. In pure faith I consented to read all those books, and as I went on reading them we discussed them.

I read a number of such books in 1893. I do not remember the names of them all, but they included the *Commentary* of Dr. Parker of the City Temple, Pearson's *Many Infallible Proofs*, and Butler's *Analogy*. Parts of these were unintelligible to me. I liked some things in them, while I did not like others. *Many Infallible Proofs* were proofs in support of the religion of the Bible, as the author understood it. The book had no effect on me. Parker's *Commentary* was morally stimulating, but it could not be of any help to one who had no faith in the prevalent Christian beliefs. Butler's *Analogy* struck me to be a very profound and difficult book, which should be read four or five times to be understood properly. It seemed to me to be written with a view to converting atheists to theism. The arguments advanced in it regarding the existence of God were unnecessary for me, as I had then passed the stage of unbelief; but the arguments in proof of Jesus being the only incarnation of God and the Mediator between God and man left me unmoved.

But Mr. Coates was not the man easily to accept defeat. He had great affection for me. He saw, round my neck, the Vaishnava necklace of Tulasi-beads. He thought it to be superstition, and was pained by it. 'This superstition does not become you. Come, let me break the necklace.'

'No, you will not. It is a sacred gift from my mother.'

'But do you believe in it?'

'I do not know its mysterious significance. I do not think I should come to harm if I did not wear it. But I cannot, without sufficient reason, give up a necklace that she put round my neck out of love and in the conviction that it would be conducive to my welfare. When, with the

passage of time, it wears away and breaks of its own accord, I shall have no desire to get a new one. But this necklace cannot be broken.'

Mr. Coates could not appreciate my argument, as he had no regard for my religion. He was looking forward to delivering me from the abyss of ignorance. He wanted to convince me that, no matter whether there was some truth in other religions, salvation was impossible for me unless I accepted Christianity, which represented *the* truth; and that my sins would not be washed away except by the intercession of Jesus, and that all good works were useless.

Just as he introduced me to several books, he introduced me to several friends whom he regarded as staunch Christians. One of these introductions was to a family which belonged to the Plymouth Brethren, a Christian sect.

Many of the contacts for which Mr. Coates was responsible were good. Most struck me as being God-fearing. But during my contact with this family, one of the Plymouth Brethren confronted me with an argument for which I was not prepared:

'You cannot understand the beauty of our religion. From what you say it appears that you must be brooding over your transgressions every moment of your life, always mending them and atoning for them. How can this ceaseless cycle of action bring you redemption? You can never have peace. You admit that we are all sinners. Now look at the perfection of our belief. Our attempts at improvement and atonement are futile. And yet redemption we must have. How can we bear the burden of sin? We can but throw it on Jesus. He is the only sinless Son of God. It is His word that those who believe in Him shall have everlasting life. Therein lies God's infinite mercy. And as we believe in the atonement of Jesus, our own sins do not bind us. Sin we must. It is impossible to live in this world sinless. And therefore Jesus suffered and atoned for all the sins of mankind. Only he who accepts His great redemption can have eternal peace. Think what a life of restlessness is yours, and what a promise of peace we have.'

The argument utterly failed to convince me. I humbly replied:

'If this be the Christianity acknowledged by all Christians, I cannot accept it. I do not seek redemption from the consequences of my sin. I seek to be redeemed from sin itself, or rather from the very thought of sin. Until I have attained that end, I shall be content to be restless.'

To which the Plymouth Brother rejoined: 'I assure you, your attempt is fruitless. Think again over what I have said.'

And the Brother proved as good as his word. He knowingly committed transgressions, and showed me that he was undisturbed by the thought of them.

But I already knew before meeting with these friends that all Christians did not believe in such a theory of atonement. Mr. Coates himself walked in the fear of God. His heart was pure, and he believed in the possibility of self-purification. The two ladies also shared this belief. Some of the books that came into my hands were full of devotion. So, although Mr. Coates was very much disturbed by this latest experience of mine, I was able to reassure him and tell him that the distorted belief of a Plymouth Brother could not prejudice me against Christianity.

My difficulties lay elsewhere. They were with regard to the Bible and its accepted interpretation.

12. SEEKING TOUCH WITH INDIANS

Before writing further about Christian contacts, I must record other experiences of the same period.

Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan Muhammad had in Pretoria the same position as was enjoyed by Dada Abdulla in Natal. There was no public movement that could be conducted without him. I made his acquaintance the very first week, and told him of my intention to get in touch with every Indian in Pretoria. I expressed a desire to study the conditions of Indians there, and asked for his help in my work, which he gladly agreed to give.

My first step was to call a meeting of all the Indians in Pretoria and to present to them a picture of their condition in the Transvaal. The meeting was held at the house of Sheth Haji Muhammad Haji Joosab, to whom I had a letter of introduction. It was principally attended by Meman merchants, though there was a sprinkling of Hindus as well. The Hindu population in Pretoria was, as a matter of fact, very small.

My speech at this meeting may be said to have been the first public speech in my life. I went fairly prepared with my subject, which was about observing truthfulness in business. I had always heard the merchants say that truth was not possible in business. I did not think so then, nor do I now. Even today there are merchant friends who contend that truth is inconsistent with business. Business, they say, is a very practical affair, and truth a matter of religion; and they argue that practical affairs are one thing, while religion is quite another. Pure truth, they hold, is out of the question in business, one can speak it only so far as is suitable. I strongly contested the position in my speech, and awakened the merchants to a

sense of their duty, which was two-fold. Their responsibility to be truthful was all the greater in a foreign land, because the conduct of a few Indians was the measure of that of the millions of their fellow-countrymen.

I had found our peoples' habits to be insanitary, as compared with those of the Englishmen around them, and drew their attention on it. I laid stress on the necessity of forgetting all distinctions such as Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Christians, Gujaratis, Madrasis, Punjabis, Sindhis, Kachchhis, Suratis, and so on.

I suggested, in conclusion, the formation of an association to make representations to the authorities concerned in respect of the hardships of the Indian settlers, and offered to place at its disposal as much of my time and service as was possible.

I saw that I made a considerable impression on the meeting.

My speech was followed by discussion. Some offered to supply me with facts. I felt encouraged. I saw that very few among my audience knew English. As I felt that knowledge of English would be useful in that country, I advised those who had leisure to learn English. I told them that it was possible to learn a language even at an advanced age, and cited cases of people who had done so. I undertook, besides, to teach a class, if one was started, or personally to instruct individuals desiring to learn the language.

The class was not started, but three young men expressed their readiness to learn at their convenience, and on condition that I went to their places to teach them. Of these, two were Musalmans—one of them a barber and the other a clerk—and the third was a Hindu, a petty shopkeeper. I agreed to suit them all. I had no misgivings regarding my capacity to teach. My pupils might become tired, but not I. Sometimes it happened that I would go to their places, only to find them engaged in their business. But I did not lose patience. None of the three desired a deep study of English, but two may be said to have made fairly good progress in about eight months. Two learnt enough to keep accounts and write ordinary business letters. The barber's ambition was confined to acquiring just enough English for dealing with his customers. As a result of their studies, two of the pupils were equipped for making a fair income.

I was satisfied with the result of the meeting. It was decided to hold such meetings, as far as I remember, once a week, or maybe once a month. These were held more or less regularly, and on these occasions there was a free exchange of ideas. The result was that there was now in Pretoria no Indian I did not know, or whose condition I was not acquainted with. This prompted me in turn to make the acquaintance of the British Agent

in Pretoria, Mr. Jacobus de Wet. He had sympathy for the Indians, but he had very little influence. However, he agreed to help us as best he could, and invited me to meet him whenever I wished.

I now communicated with the railway authorities and told them that, even under their own regulations, the disabilities about travelling under which the Indians laboured could not be justified. I got a letter in reply to the effect that first and second class tickets would be issued to Indians who were properly dressed. This was far from giving adequate relief, as it rested with the station master to decide who was 'properly dressed'.

The British Agent showed me some papers dealing with Indian affairs. Tyeb Sheth had also given me similar papers. I learnt from them how cruelly the Indians were hounded out from the Orange Free State.

In short, my stay in Pretoria enabled me to make a deep study of the social, economic, and political condition of the Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. I had no idea that this study was to be of invaluable service to me in the future. For I had thought of returning home by the end of the year, or even earlier, if the case was finished before the year was out.

But God disposed otherwise.

13. WHAT IT IS TO BE A 'COOLIE'

It would be out of place here to describe fully the condition of Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. I would suggest that those who wish to have a full idea of it may turn to my *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*. It is, however, necessary to give here a brief outline.

In the Orange Free State the Indians were deprived of all their rights by a special law enacted in 1888 or even earlier. If they chose to stay there, they could do so only to serve as waiters in hotels or to pursue some other such menial calling. The traders were driven away, with a nominal compensation. They made representations and petitions, but in vain.

A very stringent enactment was passed in the Transvaal in 1885. It was slightly amended in 1886, and it was provided under the amended law that all Indians should pay a poll tax of £3 as fee for entry into the Transvaal. They might not own land except in locations set apart for them, and in practice even that was not to be ownership. They had no franchise. All this was under the special law for Asiatics, to whom the laws for the coloured people were also applied. Under these latter, Indians might not walk on public footpaths, and might not move out of doors

after 9 p.m. without a permit. The enforcement of this last regulation was elastic so far as the Indians were concerned. Those who passed as 'Arabs' were, as a matter of favour, exempted from it. The exemption thus naturally depended on the sweet will of the police.

I had to experience the effect of both these regulations. I often went out at night for a walk with Mr. Coates, and we rarely got back home much before ten o'clock. What if the police arrested me? Mr. Coates was more concerned about this than I. He had to issue passes to his Negro servants. But how could he give one to me? Only a master might issue a permit to a servant. If I had wanted one, and even if Mr. Coates had been ready to give it, he could not have done so, for it would have been fraud.

So Mr. Coates or some friend of his took me to the State Attorney, Dr. Krause. We turned out to be barristers of the same Inn. The fact that I needed a pass to enable me to be out of doors after 9 p.m. was too much for him. He expressed sympathy for me. Instead of ordering for me a pass, he gave me a letter authorizing me to be out of doors at all hours without police interference. I always kept this letter on me whenever I went out. The fact that I never had to make use of it was a mere accident.

Dr. Krause invited me to his place, and we may be said to have become friends. I occasionally called on him, and it was through him that I was introduced to his more famous brother, who was Public Prosecutor in Johannesburg. During the Boer War he was court-martialled for conspiring to murder an English officer, and was sentenced to imprisonment for seven years. He was also disbarred by the Benchers. On the termination of hostilities he was released, and being honourably re-admitted to the Transvaal bar, resumed practice.

These connections were useful to me later on in my public life, and simplified much of my work.

The consequences of the regulation regarding the use of foot-paths were rather serious for me. I always went out for a walk through President Street to an open plain. President Kruger's house was in this street—a very modest, unostentatious building, without a garden, and not distinguishable from other houses in its neighbourhood. The houses of many of the millionaires in Pretoria were far more pretentious, and were surrounded by gardens. Indeed President Kruger's simplicity was proverbial. Only the presence of a police patrol before the house indicated that it belonged to some official. I nearly always went along the footpath past this patrol without the slightest hitch or hindrance.

Now the man on duty used to be changed from time to time. Once one of these men, without giving me the slightest warning, without even

asking me to leave the footpath, pushed and kicked me into the street. I was dismayed. Before I could question him as to his behaviour, Mr. Coates, who happened to be passing the spot on horseback, hailed me and said:

‘Gandhi, I have seen everything. I shall gladly be your witness in court if you proceed against the man. I am very sorry you have been so rudely assaulted.’

‘You need not be sorry,’ I said. ‘What does the poor man know? All coloured people are the same to him. He no doubt treats Negroes just as he has treated me. I have made it a rule not to go to court in respect of any personal grievance. So I do not intend to proceed against him.’

‘That is just like you,’ said Mr Coates, ‘but do think it over again. We must teach such men a lesson.’ He then spoke to the policeman and reprimanded him. I could not follow their talk, as it was in Dutch, the policeman being a Boer. But he apologized to me, for which there was no need. I had already forgiven him.

But I never again went through this street. There would be other men coming in this man’s place and, ignorant of the incident, they would behave likewise. Why should I unnecessarily court another kick? I therefore selected a different walk.

The incident deepened my feeling for the Indian settlers. I discussed with them the advisability of making a test case, if it were found necessary to do so, after having seen the British Agent in the matter of these regulations.

I thus made an intimate study of the hard condition of the Indian settlers, not only by reading and hearing about it, but by personal experience. I saw that South Africa was no country for a self-respecting Indian, and my mind became more and more occupied with the question as to how this state of thing might be improved.

But my principal duty for the moment was to attend to the case of Dada Abdulla.

14. PREPARATION FOR THE CASE

The year’s stay in Pretoria was a most valuable experience in my life. Here it was that I had opportunities of learning public work and acquired some measure of my capacity for it. Here it was that the religious spirit within me became a living force, and here too I acquired a true knowledge of legal practice. Here I learnt the things that a junior barrister learns in a senior barrister’s chamber, and here I also gained confidence

that I should not after all fail as a lawyer. It was likewise here that I learnt the secret of success as a lawyer.

Dada Abdulla's was no small case. The suit was for £40,000. Arising out of business transactions, it was full of intricacies of accounts. Part of the claim was based on promissory notes, and part on the specific performance of promise to deliver promissory notes. The defence was that the promissory notes were fraudulently taken and lacked sufficient consideration. There were numerous points of fact and law in this intricate case.

Both parties had engaged the best attorneys and counsel. I thus had a fine opportunity of studying their work. The preparation of the plaintiff's case for the attorney, and the sorting of facts in support of his case, had been entrusted to me. It was an education to see how much the attorney accepted, and how much he rejected from my preparation, as also to see how much use the counsel made of the brief prepared by the attorney. I saw that this preparation for the case would give me a fair measure of my powers of comprehension and my capacity for marshalling evidence.

I took the keenest interest in the case. Indeed I threw myself into it. I read all the papers pertaining to the transactions. My client was a man of great ability and reposed absolute confidence in me, and this rendered my work easy. I made a fair study of book-keeping. My capacity for translation was improved by having to translate the correspondence, which was for the most part in Gujarati.

Although, as I have said before, I took a keen interest in religious communion and in public work and always gave some of my time to them, they were not then my primary interest. The preparation of the case was my primary interest. Reading of law and looking up law cases, when necessary, had always a prior claim on my time. As a result, I acquired such a grasp of the facts of the case as perhaps was not possessed even by the parties themselves, inasmuch as I had with me the papers of both the parties.

I recalled the late Mr. Pincutt's advice—facts are three-fourths of the law. At a later date it was amply borne out by that famous barrister of South Africa, the late Mr. Leonard. In a certain case in my charge, I saw that though justice was on the side of my client, the law seemed to be against him. In despair I approached Mr. Leonard for help. He also felt that the facts of the case were very strong. He exclaimed, 'Gandhi, I have learnt one thing, and it is this, that if we take care of the facts of a case, the law will take care of itself. Let us dive deeper into the facts of this case.' With these words he asked me to study the case further and then

see him again. On a re-examination of the facts I saw them in an entirely new light, and I also hit upon an old South African case bearing on the point. I was delighted, and went to Mr. Leonard and told him everything, 'Right,' he said, 'we shall win the case. Only we must bear in mind which of the judges takes it.'

When I was making preparation for Dada Abdulla's case, I had not fully realized this paramount importance of facts. Facts mean truth, and once we adhere to truth, the law comes to our aid naturally. I saw that the facts of Dada Abdulla's case made it very strong indeed, and that the law was bound to be on his side. But I also saw that the litigation, if it were persisted in, would ruin the plaintiff and the defendant, who were relatives and both belonged to the same city. No one knew how long the case might go on. Should it be allowed to continue to be fought out in court, it might go on indefinitely and to no advantage of either party. Both, therefore, desired an immediate termination of the case, if possible.

I approached Tyeb Sheth and requested and advised him to go to arbitration. I recommended him to see his counsel. I suggested to him that if an arbitrator commanding the confidence of both parties could be appointed, the case would be quickly finished. The lawyers' fees were so rapidly mounting up that they were enough to devour all the resources of the clients, big merchants as they were. The case occupied so much of their attention that they had no time left for any other work.*In the meantime mutual ill-will was steadily increasing. I became disgusted with the profession. As lawyers, the counsel on both sides were bound to rake up points of law in support of their own clients. I also saw for the first time that the winning party never recovers all the costs incurred. Under the Court Fees Regulation there was a fixed scale of costs to be allowed as between party and party, the actual costs as between attorney and client being very much higher. This was more than I could bear. I felt that my duty was to befriend both parties and bring them together. I strained every nerve to bring about a compromise. At last Tyeb Sheth agreed. An arbitrator was appointed, the case was argued before him, and Dada Abdulla won.

But that did not satisfy me. If my client were to seek immediate execution of the award, it would be impossible for Tyeb Sheth to meet the whole of the awarded amount, and there was an unwritten law among the Porbandar Memans living in South Africa that death should be preferred to bankruptcy. It was impossible for Tyeb Sheth to pay down the whole sum of about £37,000 and costs. He meant to pay not a pie less than the amount, and he did not want to be declared bankrupt. There was

only one way. Dada Abdulla should allow him to pay in moderate instalments. He was equal to the occasion, and granted Tyeb Sheth instalments spread over a very long period. It was more difficult for me to secure this concession of payment by instalments than to get the parties to agree to arbitration. But both were happy over the result, and both rose in the public estimation. My joy was boundless. I had learnt the true practice of law. I had learnt to find out the better side of human nature and to enter men's hearts. I realized that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven asunder. The lesson was so indelibly burnt into me that a large part of my time during the twenty years of my practice as a lawyer was occupied in bringing about private compromises of hundreds of cases. I lost nothing thereby—not even money, certainly not my soul.

15. RELIGIOUS FERMENT

It is now time to turn again to my experiences with Christian friends.

Mr. Baker was getting anxious about my future. He took me to the Wellington Convention. The Protestant Christians organize such gatherings every few years for religious enlightenment, or in other words, self-purification. One may call this religious restoration or revival. The Wellington Convention was of this type. The chairman was the famous divine of the place, the Rev. Andrew Murray. Mr. Baker had hoped that the atmosphere of religious exaltation at the Convention, and the enthusiasm and earnestness of the people attending it, would inevitably lead me to embrace Christianity.

But his final hope was the efficacy of prayer. He had an abiding faith in prayer. It was his firm conviction that God could not but listen to prayer fervently offered. He would cite the instances of men like George Muller of Bristol, who depended entirely on prayer even for his temporal needs. I listened to his discourse on the efficacy of prayer with unbiased attention, and assured him that nothing could prevent me from embracing Christianity, should I feel the call. I had no hesitation in giving him this assurance, as I had long since taught myself to follow the inner voice. I delighted in submitting to it. To act against it would be difficult and painful to me.

So we went to Wellington. Mr. Baker was hard put to it in having a 'coloured man' like me for his companion. He had to suffer inconveniences on many occasions entirely on account of me. We had to break the journey on the way, as one of the days happened to be a Sunday, and Mr. Baker and his party would not travel on the Sabbath. Though the manager of the

station hotel agreed to take me in after much altercation, he absolutely refused to admit me to the dining-room, Mr. Baker was not the man to give in easily. He stood by the rights of the guests of a hotel. But I could see his difficulty. At Wellington also I stayed with Mr. Baker. In spite of his best efforts to conceal the little inconveniences that he was put to, I could see them all.

This Convention was an assemblage of devout Christians. I was delighted at their faith. I met the Rev. Murray. I saw that many were praying for me. I liked some of their hymns, they were very sweet.

The Convention lasted for three days. I could understand and appreciate the devoutness of those who attended it. But I saw no reason for changing my belief—my religion. It was impossible for me to believe that I could go to heaven or attain salvation only by becoming a Christian. When I frankly said so to some good Christian friends, they were shocked. But there was no help for it.

My difficulties lay deeper. It was more than I could believe, that Jesus was the only incarnate son of God and that only he who believed in Him would have everlasting life. If God could have sons, all of us were his sons. If Jesus was like God, or God Himself, then all men were like God and could be God Himself. My reason was not ready to believe literally that Jesus by his death and by his blood redeemed the sins of the world. Metaphorically there might be some truth in it. Again, according to Christianity, only human beings had souls, not other living beings, for whom death meant complete extinction; while I held a contrary belief. I could accept Jesus as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice, and a divine teacher, but not as the most perfect man ever born. His death on the Cross was a great example to the world, but that there was anything like a mysterious or miraculous virtue in it my heart could not accept. The pious lives of Christians did not give me anything that the lives of men of other faiths had failed to give. I had seen in other lives just the same reformation that I had heard of among Christians. Philosophically there was nothing extraordinary in Christian principles. From the point of view of sacrifice, it seemed to me that the Hindus greatly surpassed the Christians. It was impossible for me to regard Christianity as a perfect religion or the greatest of all religions.

I shared this mental churning with my Christian friends whenever there was an opportunity, but their answers could not satisfy me.

Thus if I could not accept Christianity either as a perfect, or the greatest, religion, neither was I then convinced of Hinduism being such. Hindu defects were pressingly visible to me. If untouchability could be a

part of Hinduism, it could but be a rotten part or an excrescence. I could not understand the *raison d'être* of a multitude of sects and castes. What was the meaning of saying that the Vedas were the inspired Word of God? If they were inspired, why not also the Bible and Qur'an?

As Christian friends were endeavouring to convert me, even so were Musalman friends. Abdulla Sheth had kept on inducing me to study Islam, and of course he had always something to say regarding its beauty.

I expressed my difficulties in a letter to Raychandbhai. I also corresponded with other religious authorities in India and received answers from them. Raychandbhai's letter somewhat pacified me. He asked me to be patient and to study Hinduism more deeply. One of his sentences was to this effect: 'On a dispassionate view of the question I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity.'

I purchased Sale's translation of the Qura'n and began reading it. I also obtained other books on Islam. I communicated with Christian friends in England. One of them introduced me to Edward Maitland, with whom I opened correspondence. He sent me *The Perfect Way*, a book he had written in collaboration with Anna Kingsford. The book was a repudiation of the current Christian belief. He also sent me another book, *The New Interpretation of the Bible*. I liked both. They seemed to support Hinduism. Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* overwhelmed me. It left an abiding impression on me. Before the independent thinking, profound morality, and the truthfulness of this book, all the books given me by Mr. Coates seemed to pale into insignificance.

My studies thus carried me in a direction unthought of by the Christian friends. My correspondence with Edward Maitland was fairly prolonged, and that with Raychandbhai continued until his death. I read some of the books he sent me. These included *Panchikaran*, *Maniratnamala*, *Mumukshu Prakaran* of *Yogavasishtha*, Haribhadra Suri's *Shaddarshana Samuchchaya*, and others.

Though I took a path my Christian friends had not intended for me, I have remained forever indebted to them for the religious quest that they awakened in me. I shall always cherish the memory of their contact. The years that followed had more, not less, of such sweet and sacred contacts in store for me.

16. MAN PROPOSES, GOD DISPOSES

The case having been concluded, I had no reason for staying in Pretoria. So I went back to Durban and began to make preparations for

my return home. But Abdulla Sheth was not the man to let me sail without a send-off. He gave a farewell party in my honour at Sydenham.

It was proposed to spend the whole day there. Whilst I was turning over the sheets of some of the newspapers I found there, I chanced to see a paragraph in a corner of one of them under the caption, 'Indian Franchise'. It was with reference to the bill then before the House of Legislature, which sought to deprive the Indians of their right to elect members of the Natal Legislative Assembly. I was ignorant of the bill, and so were the rest of the guests who had assembled there.

I inquired of Abdulla Sheth about it. He said: 'What can we understand in these matters? We can only understand things that affect our trade. As you know, all our trade in the Orange Free State has been swept away. We agitated about it, but in vain. We are after all lame men, being unlettered. We generally take in newspapers simply to ascertain the daily market rates, etc. What can we know of legislation? Our eyes and ears are the European attorneys here.'

'But,' said I, 'there are so many young Indians born and educated here. Do they not help you?'

'They!' exclaimed Abdulla Sheth in despair. 'They never care to come to us, and to tell you the truth, we care less to recognize them. Being Christians, they are under the thumb of the white clergymen, who in their turn are subject to the Government.'

This opened my eyes. I felt that this class should be claimed as our own. Was this the meaning of Christianity? Did they cease to be Indians because they had become Christians?

But I was on the point of returning home and hesitated to express what was passing through my mind in this matter. I simply said to Abdulla Sheth: 'This bill, if it passes into law, will make our lot extremely difficult. It is the first nail into our coffin. It strikes at the root of our self-respect.'

'It may,' echoed Sheth Abdulla. 'I will tell you the genesis of the franchise question. We knew nothing about it. But Mr. Escombe, one of our best attorneys, whom you know, put the idea into our heads. It happened thus. He is a great fighter, and there being no love lost between him and the Wharf Engineer, he feared that the Engineer might deprive him of his votes and defeat him at the election. So he acquainted us with our position, and at his instance we all registered ourselves as voters, and voted for him. You will now see how the franchise has not for us the value that you attach to it. But we understand what you say. Well, then, what is your advice?'

The other guests were listening to this conversation with attention. One of them said: 'Shall I tell you what should be done? You cancel your passage by this boat, stay here a month longer, and we will fight as you direct us.'

All the others chimed in: 'Indeed, indeed. Abdulla Sheth, you must detain Gandhibhai.'

The Sheth was a shrewd man. He said: 'I may not detain him now. Or rather, you have as much right as I to do so. But you are quite right. Let us all persuade him to stay on. But you should remember that he is a barrister. What about his fees?'

The mention of fees pained me, and I broke in: 'Abdulla Sheth, fees are out of the question. There can be no fees for public work. I can stay, if at all, as a servant. And as you know, I am not acquainted with all these friends. But if you believe that they will co-operate, I am prepared to stay a month longer. There is one thing, however. Though you need not pay me anything, work of the nature we contemplate cannot be done without some funds to start with. Thus we may have to send telegrams, we may have to print some literature, some touring may have to be done, the local attorneys may have to be consulted, and as I am ignorant of your laws, I may need some law-books for reference. All this cannot be done without money. And it is clear that one man is not enough for this work. Many must come forward to help him.'

And a chorus of voices was heard: 'Allah is great and merciful. Money will come in. Men there are, as many as you may need. You please consent to stay, and all will be well.'

The farewell party was thus turned into a working committee. I suggested finishing dinner etc. quickly, and getting back home. I worked out in my own mind an outline of the campaign. I ascertained the names of those who were on the list of voters, and made up my mind to stay on for a month.

Thus God laid the foundations of my life in South Africa, and sowed the seed of the fight for national self-respect.

17. SETTLED IN NATAL

Sheth Haji Muhammad Haji Dada was regarded as the foremost leader of the Indian community in Natal in 1893. Financially Sheth Abdulla Haji Adam was the chief among them, but he and others always gave the first place to Sheth Haji Muhammad in public affairs. A meeting was,

therefore, held under his presidentship at the house of Abdulla Sheth, at which it was resolved to offer opposition to the Franchise Bill.

Volunteers were enrolled. Natal-born Indians, that is, mostly Christian Indian youths, had been invited to attend this meeting. Mr. Paul, the Durban court interpreter, and Mr. Subhan Godfrey, headmaster of a mission school, were present, and it was they who were responsible for bringing together at the meeting a good number of Christian youths. All these enrolled themselves as volunteers.

Many of the local merchants were of course enrolled, note-worthy among them being Sheths Dawud Muhammad, Muhammad Kasam Kamruddin, Adamji Miyakhan, A. Kolandavellu Pillai, C. Lachhiram, Rangasami Padiachi, and Amod Jiva. Parsi Rustomji was of course there. From among the clerks were Messrs Manekji, Joshi, Narsinhram, and others, employees of Dada Abdulla and Co. and other big firms. They were all agreeably surprised to find themselves taking a share in public work. To be invited thus to take part was a new experience in their lives. In face of the calamity that had overtaken the community, all distinctions such as high and low, small and great, master and servant, Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Christians, Gujaratis, Madrasis, Sindhis, etc., were forgotten. All were alike the children and servants of the motherland.

The Bill had already passed, or was about to pass, its second reading. In the speeches on the occasion the fact that Indians had expressed no opposition to the stringent Bill was urged as proof of their unfitness for the franchise.

I explained the situation to the meeting. The first thing we did was to despatch a telegram to the Speaker of the Assembly requesting him to postpone further discussion of the bill. A similar telegram was sent to the premier, Sir John Robinson, and another to Mr. Escombe, as a friend of Dada Abdulla's. The Speaker promptly replied that discussion of the bill would be postponed for two days. This gladdened our hearts.

The petition to be presented to the Legislative Assembly was drawn up. Three copies had to be prepared, and one extra was needed for the press. It was also proposed to obtain as many signatures to it as possible, and all this work had to be done in the course of a night. The volunteers with a knowledge of English, and several others, sat up the whole night. Mr. Arthur, an old man who was known for his calligraphy, wrote the principal copy. The rest were written by others to someone's dictation. Five copies were thus got ready simultaneously. Merchant volunteers went out in their own carriages, or carriages whose hire they had paid, to obtain signatures to the petition. This was accomplished in quick time and the

petition was despatched. The newspapers published it with favourable comments. It likewise created an impression on the Assembly. It was discussed in the House. Partisans of the Bill offered a defence—an admittedly lame one—in reply to the arguments advanced in the petition. The Bill, however, was passed.

We all knew that this was a foregone conclusion, but the agitation had infused new life into the community, and had brought home to them the conviction that the community was one and indivisible, and that it was as much their duty to fight for its political rights as for its trading rights.

Lord Ripon was at this time Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was decided to submit to him a monster petition. This was no small task and could not be done in a day. Volunteers were enlisted, and all did their due share of the work.

I took considerable pains over drawing up this petition. I read all the literature available on the subject. My argument centred round a principle and on expedience. I argued that we had a right to the franchise in Natal, as we had a kind of franchise in India. I urged that it was expedient to retain it, as the Indian population capable of using the franchise was very small.

Ten thousand signatures were obtained in the course of a fortnight. To secure this number of signatures from the whole of the province was no light task, especially when we consider that the men were perfect strangers to the work. Specially competent volunteers had to be selected for the work, as it had been decided not to take a single signature without the signatory fully understanding the petition. The villages were scattered at long distances. The work could be done promptly only if a number of workers put their whole heart into it. And this they did. All carried out their allotted task with enthusiasm. But as I am writing these lines, the figures of Sheth Dawud Muhammad, Rustomji, Adamji Miyakhan, and Amod Jiva rise clearly before my mind. They brought in the largest number of signatures. Dawud Sheth kept going about in his carriage the whole day. And it was all a labour of love, not one of them asking for even his out-of-pocket expenses. Dada Abdulla's house became at once a caravanserai and a public office. A number of educated friends who helped me and many others had their food there. Thus every helper was put to considerable expense.

The petition was at last submitted. A thousand copies had been printed for circulation and distribution. It acquainted the Indian public for the

first time with conditions in Natal. I sent copies to all the newspapers and publicists I knew.

The *Times of India*, in a leading article on the petition, strongly supported the Indian demands. Copies were sent to journals and publicists in England representing different parties. The *London Times* supported our claims, and we began to entertain hopes of the bill being vetoed.

It was now impossible for me to leave Natal. The Indian friends surrounded me on all sides and importuned me to remain there permanently. I expressed my difficulties. I had made up my mind not to stay at public expense. I felt it necessary to set up an independent household. I thought that the house should be good and situated in a good locality. I also had the idea that I could not add to the credit of the community, unless I lived in a style usual for barristers. And it seemed to me to be impossible to run such a household with anything less than £300 a year. I therefore decided that I could stay only if the members of the community guaranteed legal work to the extent of that minimum, and I communicated my decision to them.

‘But,’ said they, ‘we should like you to draw that amount for public work, and we can easily collect it. Of course, this is apart from the fees you must charge for private legal work.’

‘No, I could not thus charge you for public work,’ said I. ‘The work would not involve the exercise on my part of much skill as barrister. My work would be mainly to make you all work. And how could I charge you for that? And then I should have to appeal to you frequently for funds for the work, and if I were to draw my maintenance from you, I should find myself at a disadvantage in making an appeal for large amounts, and we should ultimately find ourselves at a standstill. Besides I want the community to find more than £300 annually for public work.’

‘But we have now known you for some time, and are sure you would not draw anything you do not need. And if we wanted you to stay here, should we not find your expenses?’

‘It is your love and present enthusiasm that make you talk like this. How can we be sure that this love and enthusiasm will endure for ever? And as your friend and servant, I should occasionally have to say hard things to you. Heaven only knows whether I should then retain your affection. But the fact is that I must not accept any salary for public work. It is enough for me that you should all agree to entrust me with your legal work. Even that may be hard for you. For one thing I am not a white barrister. How can I be sure that the court will respond to me? Nor can I be sure how I shall fare as a lawyer. So even in giving me retainers you

may be running some risk. I should regard even the fact of your giving them to me as the reward of my public work.'

The upshot of this discussion was that about twenty merchants gave me retainers for one year for their legal work. Besides this, Dada Abdulla purchased me the necessary furniture, in lieu of a purse he had intended to give me on my departure.

Thus I settled in Natal.

18. COLOUR BAR

The symbol of a Court of justice is a pair of scales held evenly by an impartial and blind but sagacious woman. Fate has purposely made her blind, in order that she may not judge a person from his exterior but from his intrinsic worth. But the Law Society of Natal set out to persuade the Supreme Court to act in contravention of this principle and to belie its symbol.

I applied for admission as an advocate of the Supreme Court. I held a certificate of admission from the Bombay High Court. The English certificate I had to deposit with the Bombay High Court when I was enrolled there. It was necessary to attach two certificates of character to the application for admission, and thinking that these would carry more weight if given by Europeans, I secured them from two well-known European merchants whom I knew through Sheth Abdulla. The application had to be presented through a member of the bar, and as a rule the Attorney General presented such applications without fees. Mr. Escombe, who, as we have seen, was legal adviser to Messrs. Dada Abdulla and Co., was Attorney General. I called on him, and he willingly consented to present my application.

The Law Society now sprang a surprise on me by serving me with a notice opposing my application for admission. One of their objections was that the original English certificate was not attached to my application. But the main objection was that when the regulations regarding admission of advocates were made, the possibility of a coloured man applying could not have been contemplated. Natal owed its growth to European enterprise, and therefore it was necessary that the European element should predominate in the bar. If coloured people were admitted, they might gradually outnumber the Europeans, and the bulwark of their protection would break down.

The Law Society had engaged a distinguished lawyer to support their opposition. As he too was connected with Dada Abdulla and Co., he sent

me word through Sheth Abdulla to go and see him. He talked with me quite frankly, and inquired about my antecedents, which I gave. Then he said:

‘I have nothing to say against you. I was only afraid lest you should be some colonial-born adventurer. And the fact that your application was unaccompanied by the original certificate supported by suspicion. There have been men who have made use of diplomas which did not belong to them. The certificates of character from European traders you have submitted have no value for me. What do they know about you? What can be the extent of their acquaintance with you?’

‘But,’ said I, ‘everyone here is a stranger to me. Even Sheth Abdulla first came to know me here.’

‘But then you say he belongs to the same place as you? If your father was Prime Minister there, Sheth Abdulla is bound to know your family. If you were to produce his affidavit, I should have absolutely no objection. I would then gladly communicate to the Law Society my inability to oppose your application.’

This talk enraged me, but I restrained my feelings. ‘If I had attached Dada Abdulla’s certificate,’ said I to myself, ‘it would have been rejected, and they would have asked for Europeans’ certificates. And what has my admission as advocate to do with my birth and my antecedents? How could my birth, whether humble or objectionable, be used against me? But I contained myself and quietly replied:

‘Though I do not admit that the Law Society has any authority to require all these details, I am quite prepared to present the affidavit you desire.’

Sheth Abdulla’s affidavit was prepared and duly submitted to the counsel for the Law Society. He said he was satisfied. But not so the Law Society. It opposed my application before the Supreme Court, which ruled out the opposition without even calling upon Mr. Escombe to reply. The Chief Justice said in effect:

‘The objection that the applicant has not attached the original certificate has no substance. If he has made a false affidavit, he can be prosecuted, and his name can then be struck off the roll, if he is proved guilty. The law makes no distinction between white and coloured people. The court has therefore no authority to prevent Mr. Gandhi from being enrolled as an advocate. We admit his application. Mr. Gandhi, you can now take the oath.’

I stood up and took the oath before the registrar. As soon as I was sworn in, the Chief Justice, addressing me, said:

'You must now take off your turban, Mr. Gandhi. You must submit to the rules of the court with regard to the dress to be worn by practising barristers.'

I saw my limitations. The turban that I had insisted on wearing in the District Magistrate's court I took off in obedience to the order of the Supreme Court. Not that if I had resisted the order, the resistance could not have been justified. But I wanted to reserve my strength for fighting bigger battles. I should not exhaust my skill as a fighter insisting on retaining my turban. It was worthy of a better cause.

Sheth Abdulla and other friends did not like my submission (or was it weakness?). They felt that I should have stood by my right to wear the turban while practising in the court. I tried to reason with them. I tried to press home to them the truth of the maxim, 'When at Rome, do as the Romans do.' 'It would be right,' I said, 'to refuse to obey, if in India an English officer or judge ordered you to take off your turban; but as an officer of the court, it would have ill become me to disregard a custom of the court in the province of Natal.'

I pacified the friends somewhat with these and similar arguments, but I do not think I convinced them completely, in this instance, of the applicability of the principle of looking at a thing from a different standpoint in different circumstances. But all my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of Satyagraha. It has often meant endangering my life and incurring the displeasure of friends. But truth is hard as adamant and tender as a blossom.

The opposition of the Law Society gave me another advertisement in South Africa. Most of the newspapers condemned the opposition and accused the Law Society of jealousy. The advertisement, to some extent, simplified my work.

19. NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Practice as a lawyer was and remained for me a subordinate occupation. It was necessary that I should concentrate on public work to justify my stay in Natal. The despatch of the petition regarding the disfranchising bill was not sufficient in itself. Sustained agitation was essential for making an impression on the Secretary of State for the Colonies. For this purpose it was thought necessary to bring into being a permanent organization. So I consulted Sheth Abdulla and other friends, and we all decided to have a public organization of a permanent character.

To find out a name to be given to the new organization perplexed me sorely. It was not to identify itself with any particular party. The name 'Congress', I knew, was in bad odour with the Conservatives in England, and yet the Congress was the very life of India. I wanted to popularize it in Natal. It savoured of cowardice to hesitate to adopt the name. Therefore, with full explanation of my reasons, I recommended that the organization should be called the Natal Indian Congress, and on the 22nd May the Natal Indian Congress came into being.

Dada Abdulla's spacious room was packed to the full on that day. The Congress received the enthusiastic approval of all present. Its constitution was simple, the subscription was heavy. Only he who paid five shillings monthly could be a member. The well-to-do classes were persuaded to subscribe as much as they could. Abdulla Sheth headed the list with £2 per month. Two other friends also put down the same. I thought I should not stint my subscription, and put down a pound per month. This was for me no small amount. But I thought that it would not be beyond my means, if I was to pay my way at all. And God helped me. We thus got a considerable number of members who subscribed £1 per month. The number of those who put down 10s. was even larger. Besides this, there were donations, which were gratefully accepted.

Experience showed that no one paid his subscription for the mere asking. It was impossible to call frequently on members outside Durban. The enthusiasm of one moment seemed to wear away the next. Even the members in Durban had to be considerably dunned before they would pay in their subscriptions.

The task of collecting subscriptions lay with me, I being the secretary. And we came to a stage when I had to keep my clerk engaged all day long in the work of collection. The man got tired of the job, and I felt that if the situation was to be improved, the subscriptions should be made payable annually and not monthly, and that too strictly in advance. So I called a meeting of the Congress. Everyone welcomed the proposal for making the subscription annual instead of monthly and for fixing the minimum at £3. Thus the work of collection was considerably facilitated.

I had learnt at the outset not to carry on public work with borrowed money. One could rely on people's promises in most matters, except in respect of money. I had never found people quick to pay the amounts they had undertaken to subscribe, and the Natal Indians were no exception to the rule. As, therefore, no work was done unless there were funds on hand, the Natal Indian Congress had never been in debt.

My co-workers evinced extraordinary enthusiasm in canvassing members. It was work which interested them, and was at the same time an invaluable experience. Large numbers of people gladly came forward with cash subscriptions. Work in the distant villages of the interior was rather difficult. People did not know the nature of public work. And yet we had invitations to visit far away places, leading merchants of every place extending their hospitality.

On one occasion during this tour the situation was rather difficult. We expected our host to contribute £6, but he refused to give anything more than £3. If we had accepted that amount from him, others would have followed suit, and our collections would have been spoiled. It was a late hour of the night, and we were all hungry. But how could we dine without having first obtained the amount we were bent on getting? All persuasion was useless. The host seemed to be adamant. Other merchants in the town reasoned with him, and we all sat up throughout the night, he as well as we determined not to budge one inch. Most of my co-workers were burning with rage, but they contained themselves. At last, when day was already breaking, the host yielded, paid down £6, and feasted us. This happened at Tongaat, but the repercussion of the incident was felt as far as Stanger on the North Coast and Charlestown in the interior. It also hastened our work of collection.

But collecting funds was not the only thing to do. In fact I had long learnt the principle of never having more money at one's disposal than necessary.

Meetings used to be held once a month, or even once a week if required. Minutes of the proceedings of the preceding meeting would be read, and all sorts of questions would be discussed. People had no experience of taking part in public discussions, or of speaking briefly and to the point. Everyone hesitated to stand up to speak. I explained to them the rules of procedure at meetings, and they respected them. They realized that it was an education for them, and many who had never been accustomed to speaking before an audience soon acquired the habit of thinking and speaking publicly about matters of public interest.

Knowing that in public work minor expenses at times absorbed large accounts, I had decided not to have even the receipt books printed in the beginning. I had a cyclostyle machine in my office, on which I took copies of receipts and reports. Such things I began to get printed only when the Congress coffers were full, and when the number of members, and work, had increased. Such economy is essential for every organization, and yet I know that it is not always exercised. That is why I have thought it proper

to enter into these little details of the beginnings of a small but growing organization.

People never cared to have receipts for the amounts they paid, but we always insisted on the receipts being given. Every pie was thus clearly accounted for, and I dare say the account books for the year 1894 can be found intact even today in the records of the Natal Indian Congress. Carefully kept accounts are a *sine qua non* for any organization. Without them it falls into disrepute. Without properly kept accounts, it is impossible to maintain truth in its pristine purity.

Another feature of the Congress was service of colonial-born educated Indians. The Colonial-born Indian Educational Association was founded under the auspices of the Congress. The members consisted mostly of these educated youths. They had to pay a nominal subscription. The Association served to ventilate their needs and grievances, to stimulate thought amongst them, to bring them into touch with Indian merchants, and also to afford them scope for service of the community. It was a sort of debating society. The members met regularly and spoke, or read papers on different subjects. A small library was also opened in connection with the Association.

The third feature of the Congress was propaganda. This consisted in acquainting the English in South Africa and England and people in India with the real state of things in Natal. With that end in view I wrote two pamphlets. The first was *An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa*. It contained a statement, supported by evidence, of the general condition of Natal Indians. The other was entitled *The Indian Franchise—An Appeal*. It contained a brief history of the Indian franchise in Natal with facts and figures. I had devoted considerable labour and study to the preparation of these pamphlets, and the result was quite commensurate with the trouble taken. They were widely circulated.

All this activity resulted in winning the Indians numerous friends in South Africa, and in obtaining the active sympathy of all parties in India. It also opened out and placed before the South African Indians a definite line of action.

20. BALASUNDARAM

The heart's earnest and pure desire is always fulfilled. In my own experience I have often seen this rule verified. Service of the poor has been my heart's desire, and it has always thrown me amongst the poor and enabled me to identify myself with them.

Although the members of the Natal Indian Congress included the colonial-born Indians and the clerical class, the unskilled wage-earners, the indentured labourers, were still outside its pale. The Congress was not yet theirs. They could not afford to belong to it by paying the subscription and becoming its members. The Congress could win their attachment only by serving them. An opportunity offered itself when neither the Congress nor I was really ready for it. I had put in scarcely three or four months' practice, and the Congress also was still in its infancy, when a Tamil man in tattered clothes, head-gear in hand, two front teeth broken and his mouth bleeding, stood before me trembling and weeping. He had been heavily belaboured by his master. I learnt all about him from my clerk, who was a Tamilian. Balasundaram—as that was the visitor's name--was serving his indenture under a well-known European resident of Durban. The master, getting angry with him, had lost self-control, and had beaten Balasundaram severely, breaking two of his teeth.

I sent him to a doctor. In those days only white doctors were available. I wanted a certificate from the doctor about the nature of the injury Balasundaram had sustained. I secured the certificate, and straightway took the injured man to the magistrate, to whom I submitted his affidavit. The magistrate was indignant when he read it, and issued a summons against the employer.

It was far from my desire to get the employer punished. I simply wanted Balasundaram to be released from him. I read the law about indentured labour. If an ordinary servant left service without giving notice, he was liable to be sued by his master in a civil court. With the indentured labourer the case was entirely different. He was liable, in similar circumstances, to be proceeded against in a criminal court and to be imprisoned on conviction. That is why Sir William Hunter called the indenture system almost as bad as slavery. Like the slave, the indentured labourer was the property of his master.

There were only two ways of releasing Balasundaram: either by getting the Protector of Indentured Labourers to cancel his indenture or transfer him to someone else, or by getting Balasundaram's employer to release him. I called on the latter and said to him: 'I do not want to proceed against you and get you punished. I think you realize that you have severely beaten the man. I shall be satisfied if you will transfer the indenture to someone else.' To this he readily agreed. I next saw the Protector. He also agreed, on condition that I found a new employer.

So I went off in search of an employer. He had to be a European, as no Indians could employ indentured labour. At that time I knew very few

Europeans. I met one of them. He very kindly agreed to take on Balasundaram. I gratefully acknowledged his kindness. The magistrate convicted Balasundaram's employer, and recorded that he had undertaken to transfer the indenture to someone else.

Balasundaram's case reached the ears of every indentured labourer, and I came to be regarded as their friend. I hailed this connection with delight. A regular stream of indentured labourers began to pour into my office, and I got the best opportunity of learning their joys and sorrows.

The echoes of Balasundaram's case were heard in far-off Madras. Labourers from different parts of the province who went to Natal on indenture, came to know of this case through their indentured brethren.

There was nothing extraordinary in the case itself, but the fact that there was someone in Natal to espouse their cause and publicly work for them gave the indentured labourer a joyful surprise and inspired him with hope.

I have said that Balasundaram entered my office, head-gear in hand. There was a peculiar pathos about the circumstance, which also showed our humiliation. I have already narrated the incident when I was asked to take off my turban. A practice had been forced upon every indentured labourer and every Indian stranger to take off his head-gear when visiting a European, whether the head-gear were a cap, a turban, or a scarf wrapped round the head. A salute even with both hands was not sufficient. Balasundaram thought that he should follow the practice even with me. This was the first case in my experience. I felt humiliated and asked him to tie up his scarf. He did so, not without a certain hesitation, but I could perceive the pleasure on his face.

It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow-beings.

21. THE £3 TAX

Balasundaram's case brought me into touch with the indentured Indians. What impelled me, however, to make a deep study of their condition was the campaign for bringing them under special heavy taxation.

In the same year, 1894, the Natal Government sought to impose an annual tax of £25 on the indentured Indians. The proposal astonished me. I put the matter before the Congress for discussion, and it was immediately resolved to organize the necessary opposition.

At the outset I must explain briefly the genesis of the tax.

About the year 1860 the Europeans in Natal, finding that there was considerable scope for sugar-cane cultivation, felt themselves in need of labour. Without outside labour the cultivation of cane and the manufacture of sugar were impossible, as the Natal Zulus were not suited to this form of work. The Natal Government therefore corresponded with the Indian Government and secured their permission to recruit Indian labour. These recruits were to sign an indenture to work in Natal for five years, and at the end of the term they were to be at liberty to settle there and to have full rights of ownership of land. Those were the inducements held out to them, for the whites then had looked forward to improving their agriculture by the industry of the Indian labourers after the term of their indentures had expired.

But the Indians gave more than had been expected of them. They grew large quantities of vegetables. They introduced a number of Indian varieties and made it possible to grow the local varieties cheaper. They also introduced the mango. Nor did their enterprise stop at agriculture. They entered trade. They purchased land for building, and many raised themselves from the status of labourers to that of owners of land and houses. Merchants from India followed them and settled there for trade. The late Sheth Abubakar Amod was first among them. He soon built up an extensive business.

The white traders were alarmed. When they first welcomed the Indian labourers, they had not reckoned with their business skill. They might be tolerated as independent agriculturists, but their competition in trade could not be brooked.

This sowed the seed of the antagonism to Indians. Many other factors contributed to its growth. Our different ways of living, our simplicity, our contentment with small gains, our indifference to the laws of hygiene and sanitation, our slowness in keeping our surroundings clean and tidy, and our stinginess in keeping our houses in good repair—all these, combined with the difference in religion, contributed to fan the flame of antagonism. Through legislation, this antagonism found its expression in the disfranchising bill and the bill to impose a tax on the indentured Indians. Independent of legislation, a number of pinpricks had already been started.

The first suggestion was that the Indian labourers should be forcibly repatriated, so that the term of their indentures might expire in India. The Government of India was not likely to accept the suggestion. Another proposal was therefore made to the effect that:

1. the indentured labourer should return to India on the expiry of his indenture; or that

2. he should sign a fresh indenture every two years, an increment being given at each renewal; and that

3. in the case of his refusal to return to India or renew the indenture he should pay an annual tax of £25.

A deputation composed of Sir Henry Binns and Mr. Mason was sent to India to get the proposal approved by the Government there. The Viceroy at that time was Lord Elgin. He disapproved of the £25 tax, but agreed to poll tax of £3. I thought then, as I do even now, that this was a serious blunder on the part of the Viceroy. In giving his approval he had in no way thought of the interests of India. It was no part of his duty thus to accommodate the Natal Europeans. In the course of three or four years an indentured labourer with his wife and each male child over 16 and female child over 13 came under the impost. To levy a yearly tax of £12 from a family of four--husband, wife and two children--when the average income of the husband was never more than 14s. a month, was atrocious, and unknown anywhere else in the world.

We organized a fierce campaign against this tax. If the Natal Indian Congress had remained silent on the subject, the Viceroy might have approved of even the £25 tax. The reduction from £25 to £3 was probably due solely to the Congress agitation. But I may be mistaken in thinking so. It may be possible that the Indian Government had disapproved of the £25 tax from the beginning, and reduced it to £3 irrespective of the opposition from the Congress. In any case it was a breach of trust on the part of the Indian Government. As trustee of the welfare of India, the Viceroy ought never to have approved of this inhuman tax.

The Congress could not regard it as any great achievement to have succeeded in getting the tax reduced from £25 to £3. The regret was still there that it had not completely safeguarded the interests of the indentured Indians. It ever remained its determination to get the tax remitted, but it was twenty years before the determination was realized. And when it was realized, it came as a result of the labours of not only the Natal Indians, but of all the Indians in South Africa. The breach of faith with the late Mr. Gokhale became the occasion of the final campaign, in which the indentured took their full share, some of them losing their lives as a result of the firing that was resorted to, and over ten thousand suffering imprisonment.

But truth triumphed in the end. The sufferings of the Indians were the expression of that truth. Yet it would not have triumphed except for

unflinching faith, great patience, and incessant effort. Had the community given up the struggle, had the Congress abandoned the campaign and submitted to the tax as inevitable, the hated impost would have continued to be levied from the indentured Indians until this day, to the eternal shame of the Indians in South Africa and of the whole of India.

22. COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

If I found myself entirely absorbed in the service of the community, the reason behind it was my desire for self-realization. I had made the religion of service my own, as I felt that God could be realized only through service. And service for me was the service of India, because it came to me without my seeking, because I had an aptitude for it. I had gone to South Africa for travel, for finding an escape from Kathiawad intrigues, and for gaining my own livelihood. But as I have said, I found myself in search of God and striving for self-realization.

Christian friends had whetted my appetite for knowledge, which had become almost insatiable, and they would not leave me in peace, even if I desired to be indifferent. In Durban Mr. Spencer Walton, the head of the South Africa General Mission, found me out. I became almost a member of his family. At the back of this acquaintance was of course my contact with Christians in Pretoria. Mr. Walton had a manner all his own. I do not recollect his ever having invited me to embrace Christianity. But he placed his life as an open book before me, and let me watch all his movements. Mrs. Walton was a very gentle and talented woman. I liked the attitude of this couple. We knew the fundamental differences between us. Any amount of discussion could not efface them. Yet even differences prove helpful, where there are tolerance, charity, and truth. I liked Mr. and Mrs. Walton's humility, perseverance, and devotion to work, and we met very frequently.

This friendship kept alive my interest in religion. It was impossible now to get the leisure that I used to have in Pretoria for my religious studies. But what little time I could spare, I turned to good account. My religious correspondence continued. Raychandbhai was guiding me. Some friend sent me Narmadashankar's book *Dharma Vichar*. Its preface proved very helpful. I had heard about the Bohemian way in which the poet had lived, and a description in the preface of the revolution effected in his life by his religious studies captivated me. I came to like the book, and read it from cover to cover with attention. I read with interest Max Muller's book, *India—What can it teach us?*, and the translation of the *Upanishads*

published by the Theosophical Society. All this enhanced my regard for Hinduism, and its beauties began to grow upon me. It did not, however, prejudice me against other religions. I read Washington Irving's *Life of Mahomet and His Successors* and Carlyle's panegyric on the Prophet. These books raised Muhammad in my estimation. I also read a book called *The Sayings of Zarathustra*.

Thus I gained more knowledge of the different religions. The study stimulated my self-introspection, and fostered in me the habit of putting into practice whatever appealed to me in my studies. Thus I began some of the Yogic practices, as well as I could understand them from a reading of the Hindu books. But I could not get on very far, and decided to follow them with the help of some expert when I returned to India. The desire has never been fulfilled.

I made too an intensive study of Tolstoy's books. *The Gospels in Brief*, *What to Do?*, and other books made a deep impression on me. I began to realize more and more the infinite possibilities of universal love.

About the same time, I came in contact with another Christian family. At their suggestion I attended the Wesleyan church every Sunday. For these days I also had their standing invitation to dinner. The church did not make a favourable impression on me. The sermons seemed to me uninspiring. The congregation did not strike me as being particularly religious. They were not an assembly of devout souls; they appeared rather to be worldly-minded people, going to church for recreation and in conformity to custom. Here, at times, I would involuntarily doze. I was ashamed, but some of my neighbours, who were in no better case, lightened the shame. I could not go on long like this, and soon gave up attending the service.

My connection with the family I used to visit every Sunday was abruptly broken. In fact it may be said that I was warned to visit it no more. It happened thus. My hostess was a good and simple woman, but somewhat narrow-minded. We always discussed religious subjects. I was then re-reading Arnold's *Light of Asia*. Once we began to compare the life of Jesus with that of Buddha. 'Look at Gautama's compassion!' said I. 'It was not confined to mankind, it was extended to all living beings. Does not one's heart overflow with love to think of the lamb joyously perched on his shoulders? One fails to notice this love for all living beings in the life of Jesus.' The comparison pained the good lady. I could understand her feelings. I cut the matter short, and we went to the dining room. Her son, a cherub aged scarcely five, was also with us. I am happiest when in the midst of children, and this youngster and I had long been

friends. I spoke derisively of the piece of meat on his plate and in high praise of the apple on mine. The innocent boy was carried away and joined in my praise of the fruit.

But the mother? She was dismayed.

I was warned. I checked myself and changed the subject. The following week I visited the family as usual, but not without trepidation. I did not see that I should stop going there, I did not think it proper either. But the good lady made my way easy.

‘Mr. Gandhi,’ she said, ‘please don’t take it ill if I feel obliged to tell you that my boy is none the better for your company. Every day he hesitates to eat meat and asks for fruit, reminding me of your argument. This is too much. If he gives up meat, he is bound to get weak, if not ill. How could I bear it? Your discussions should henceforth be only with us elders. They are sure to react badly on children.’

‘Mrs. ———,’ I replied, ‘I am sorry. I can understand your feelings as a parent, for I too have children. We can very easily end this unpleasant state of things. What I eat and omit to eat is bound to have a greater effect on the child than what I say. The best way, therefore, is for me to stop these visits. That certainly need not affect our friendship.’

‘I thank you,’ she said with evident relief.

23. AS A HOUSEHOLDER

To set up a household was no new experience for me. But the establishment in Natal was different from the ones that I had had in Bombay and London. This time part of the expense was solely for the sake of prestige. I thought it necessary to have a household in keeping with my position as an Indian barrister in Natal and as a representative. So I had a nice little house in a prominent locality. It was also suitably furnished. Food was simple, but as I used to invite English friends and Indian co-workers, the housekeeping bills were always fairly high.

A good servant is essential in every household. But I have never known how to keep anyone as a servant.

I had a friend as companion and help, and a cook who had become a member of the family. I also had office clerks boarding and lodging with me.

I think I had a fair amount of success in this experiment, but it was not without its modicum of the bitter experiences of life.

The companion was very clever and, I thought, faithful to me. But in this I was deceived. He became jealous of an office clerk who was staying

with me, and wove such a tangled web that I suspected the clerk. This clerical friend had a temper of his own. Immediately he saw that he had been the object of my suspicion, he left both the house and the office. I was pained. I felt that perhaps I had been unjust to him, and my conscience always stung me.

In the meanwhile, the cook needed a few days' leave, or for some other cause was away. It was necessary to procure another during his absence. Of this new man I learnt later that he was a perfect scamp. But for me he proved a godsend. Within two or three days of his arrival, he discovered certain irregularities that were going on under my roof without my knowledge, and he made up his mind to warn me. I had the reputation of being a credulous but straight man. The discovery was to him, therefore, all the more shocking. Every day at one o'clock I used to go home from office for lunch. At about twelve o'clock one day the cook came panting to the office, and said, 'Please come home at once. There is a surprise for you.'

'Now, what is this?' I asked. 'You must tell me what it is. How can I leave the office at this hour to go and see it?'

'You will regret it, if you don't come. That is all I can say.'

I felt an appeal in his persistence. I went home accompanied by a clerk and the cook who walked ahead of us. He took me straight to the upper floor, pointed at my companion's room, and said, 'Open this door and see for yourself.'

I saw it all. I knocked at the door. No reply! I knocked heavily so as to make the very walls shake. The door was opened. I saw a prostitute inside. I asked her to leave the house, never to return.

To the companion I said, 'From this moment I cease to have anything to do with you. I have been thoroughly deceived and have made a fool of myself. That is how you have requited my trust in you?'

Instead of coming to his senses, he threatened to expose me.

'I have nothing to conceal,' said I. 'Expose whatever I may have done. But you must leave me this moment.'

This made him worse. There was no help for it. So I said to the clerk standing downstairs: 'Please go and inform the police superintendent, with my compliments, that a person living with me has misbehaved himself. I do not want to keep him in my house, but he refuses to leave. I shall be much obliged if police help can be sent me.'

This showed him that I was in earnest. His guilt unnerved him. He apologized to me, entreated me not to inform the police, and agreed to leave the house immediately, which he did.

The incident came as a timely warning in my life. Only now could I see clearly how thoroughly I had been beguiled by this evil genius. In harbouring him I had chosen a bad means for a good end. I had expected to 'gather figs of thistles'. I had known that the companion was a bad character, and yet I believed in his faithfulness to me. In the attempt to reform him I was near ruining myself. I had disregarded the warnings of kind friends. Infatuation had completely blinded me.

But for the new cook, I should never have discovered the truth, and being under the influence of the companion, I should probably have been unable to lead the life of detachment that I then began. I should always have been wasting time on him. He had the power to keep me in the dark and to mislead me.

But God came to the rescue as before. My intentions were pure, and so I was saved in spite of my mistakes, and this early experience thoroughly forewarned me for the future.

The cook had been almost a messenger sent from Heaven. He did not know cooking, and as a cook he could not have remained at my place. But no one else could have opened my eyes. This was not the first time, as I subsequently learnt, that the woman had been brought into my house. She had come often before, but no one had the courage of this cook. For everyone knew how blindly I trusted the companion. The cook had, as it were, been sent to me just to do this service, for he begged leave of me that very moment.

'I cannot stay in your house,' he said, 'You are so easily misled. This is no place for me.'

I let him go.

I now discovered that the man who had poisoned my ears against the clerk was no other than this companion. I tried very hard to make amends to the clerk for the injustice I had done him. It has, however, been my eternal regret that I could never satisfy him fully. Howsoever you may repair it, a rift is a rift.

24. HOMEWARD

By now I had been three years in South Africa. I had got to know the people, and they had got to know me. In 1896 I asked permission to go home for six months, for I saw that I was in for a long stay there. I had established a fairly good practice, and could see that people felt the need of my presence. So I made up my mind to go home, fetch my wife and children, and then return and settle out there. I also saw that if I went

home, I might be able to do there some public work, by educating public opinion and creating more interest in the Indians of South Africa. The £3 tax was an open sore. There could be no peace until it was abolished.

But who was to take charge of the Congress work and Education Society in my absence? I could think of two men—Adamji Miyakhan and Parsi Rustomji. There were many workers now available from the commercial class. But the foremost among those who could fulfil the duties of the secretary by regular work, and who also commanded the regard of the Indian community, were these two. The secretary certainly needed a working knowledge of English. I recommended the late Adamji Miyakhan's name to the Congress, and it approved of his appointment as secretary. Experience showed that the choice was a very happy one. Adamji Miyakhan satisfied all with his perseverance, liberality, amiability, and courtesy, and proved to everyone that the secretary's work did not require a man with a barrister's degree or high English education.

About the middle of 1896 I sailed for home in the s.s. *Pongola*, which was bound for Calcutta.

There were very few passengers on board. Among them were two English officers, with whom I came in close contact. With one of them I used to play chess for an hour daily. The ship's doctor gave me a *Tamil Self-Teacher* which I began to study. My experience in Natal had shown me that I should acquire a knowledge of Urdu to get into closer contact with the Musalmans, and of Tamil to get into closer touch with the Madras Indians.

At the request of the English friend who read Urdu with me, I found out a good Urdu Munshi from among the deck passengers, and we made excellent progress in our studies. The officer had a better memory than I. He would never forget a word after once he had seen it; I often found it difficult to decipher Urdu letters. I brought more perseverance to bear, but could never overtake the officer.

With Tamil I made fair progress. There was no help available, but the *Tamil Self-Teacher* was a well-written book, and I did not feel in need of much outside help.

I had hoped to continue these studies even after reaching India, but it was impossible. Most of my reading since 1893 has been done in jail. I did make some progress in Tamil and Urdu, in jails—Tamil in South African jails, and Urdu in Yeravda jail. But I never learnt to speak Tamil, and the little I could do by way of reading is now rusting away for want of practice.

I still feel what a handicap this ignorance of Tamil or Telugu has been. The affection that the Dravidians in South Africa showered on me has remained a cherished memory. Whenever I see a Tamil or Telugu friend, I cannot but recall the faith, perseverance, and selfless sacrifice of many of his compatriots in South Africa. And they were mostly illiterate, the men no less than the women. The fight in South Africa was for such, and it was fought by illiterate soldiers; it was for the poor, and the poor took their full share in it. Ignorance of their language, however, was never a handicap to me in stealing the hearts of these simple and good countrymen. They spoke broken Hindustani or broken English, and we found no difficulty in getting on with our work. But I wanted to requite their affection by learning Tamil and Telugu. In Tamil, as I have said, I made some little progress, but in Telugu, which I tried to learn in India, I did not get beyond the alphabet. I fear now I can never learn these languages, and am therefore hoping that the Dravidians will learn Hindustani. The non-English-speaking among them in South Africa do speak Hindi or Hindustani, however indifferently. It is only the English-speaking ones who will not learn it, as though a knowledge of English were an obstacle to learning our own languages.

But I have digressed. Let me finish the narrative of my voyage. I have to introduce to my readers the captain of the s.s. *Pongola*. We had become friends. The good captain was a Plymouth Brother. Our talks were more about spiritual subjects than nautical. He drew a line between morality and faith. The teaching of the Bible was to him child's play. Its beauty lay in its simplicity. Let all men, women, and children, he would say, have faith in Jesus and his sacrifice, and their sins were sure to be redeemed. This friend revived my memory of the Plymouth Brother of Pretoria. The religion that imposed any moral restrictions was to him no good. My vegetarian food had been the occasion of the whole of this discussion. Why should I not eat meat, or for that matter beef? Had not God created all the lower animals for the enjoyment of mankind as, for instance, He had created the vegetable kingdom? These questions inevitably drew us into religious discussion.

We could not convince each other. I was confirmed in my opinion that religion and morality were synonymous. The captain had no doubt about the correctness of his opposite conviction.

At the end of twenty-four days the pleasant voyage came to a close, and admiring the beauty of the Hooghly, I landed at Calcutta. The same day I took the train for Bombay.

25. IN INDIA

On my way to Bombay the train stopped at Allahabad for forty-five minutes. I decided to utilize the interval for a drive through the town. I also had to purchase some medicine at a chemist's shop. The chemist was half asleep, and took an unconscionable time in dispensing the medicine, with the result that when I reached the station, the train had just started. The station master had kindly detained the train one minute for my sake, but not seeing me coming, had carefully ordered my luggage to be taken out of the train.

I took a room at Kelner's, and decided to start work there and then. I had heard a good deal about *The Pioneer*, published from Allahabad, and I had understood it to be an opponent of Indian aspirations. I have an impression that Mr. Chesney, Jr., was the editor at that time. I wanted to secure the help of every party, so I wrote a note to Mr. Chesney, telling him how I had missed the train, and asking for an appointment so as to enable me to leave the next day. He immediately gave me one, at which I was very happy, especially when I found that he gave me a patient hearing. He promised to notice in his paper anything that I might write, but added that he could not promise to endorse all the Indian demands, inasmuch as he was bound to understand and give due weight to the viewpoint of the Colonials as well.

'It is enough,' I said, 'that you should study the question and discuss it in your paper. I ask and desire nothing but the barest justice that is due to us.'

The rest of the day was spent in having a look round, admiring the magnificent confluence of the three rivers, the 'Triveni', and planning the work before me.

This unexpected interview with the editor of *The Pioneer* laid the foundation of the series of incidents which ultimately led to my being lynched in Natal.

I went straight to Rajkot without halting at Bombay, and began to make preparations for writing a pamphlet on the situation in South Africa. The writing and publication of the pamphlet took about a month. It had a green cover, and came to be known afterwards as the Green Pamphlet. In it I drew a purposely subdued picture of the conditions of Indians in South Africa. The language I used was more moderate than that of the two pamphlets which I have referred to before, as I knew that things heard of from a distance appear bigger than they are.

Ten thousand copies were printed and sent to all the papers and leaders of every party in India. *The Pioneer* was the first to notice it editorially. A

summary of the article was cabled by Reuter to England, and a summary of that summary was cabled to Natal by Reuter's London office. This cable was not longer than three lines in print. It was a miniature, but exaggerated, edition of the picture I had drawn of the treatment accorded to the Indians in Natal, and it was not in my words. We shall see later on the effect this had in Natal. In the meanwhile every paper of note commented at length on the question.

To get these pamphlets ready for posting was no small matter. It would have been expensive too, if I had employed paid help for preparing wrappers, etc. But I hit upon a much simpler plan. I gathered together all the children in my locality and asked them to volunteer two or three hours' labour of a morning, when they had no school. This they willingly agreed to do. I promised to bless them and give them, as a reward, used postage stamps which I had collected. They got through the work in no time. That was my first experiment of having little children as volunteers. Two of those little friends are my co-workers today.

Plague broke out in Bombay about this time, and there was panic all around. There was fear of an outbreak in Rajkot. As I felt that I could be some help in the sanitation department, I offered my services to the State. They were accepted, and I was put on the committee which was appointed to look into the question. I laid especial emphasis on the cleanliness of latrines, and the committee decided to inspect these in every street. The poor people had no objection to their latrines being inspected, and what is more, they carried out the improvements suggested to them. But when we went to inspect the houses of the upper ten, some of them even refused us admission, not to talk of listening to our suggestions. It was our common experience that the latrines of the rich were more unclean. They were dark and stinking and reeking with filth and worms. The improvements we suggested were quite simple, e.g., to have buckets for excrement instead of allowing it to drop on the ground, to see that urine also was collected in buckets instead of allowing it to soak into the ground, and to demolish the partitions between the outer walls and the latrines, so as to give the latrines more light and air and enable the scavenger to clean them properly. The upper classes raised numerous objections to this last improvement, and in most cases it was not carried out.

The committee had to inspect the untouchables' quarters also. Only one member of the committee was ready to accompany me there. To the rest it was something preposterous to visit those quarters, still more so to inspect their latrines. But for me those quarters were an agreeable surprise.

That was the first visit in my life to such a locality. The men and women there were surprised to see us. I asked them to let us inspect their latrines.

‘Latrines for us!’ they exclaimed in astonishment. ‘We go and perform our functions out in the open. Latrines are for you big people.’

‘Well, then, you won’t mind if we inspect your houses?’ I asked.

‘You are perfectly welcome, sir. You may see every nook and corner of our houses. Ours are no houses, they are holes.’

I went in and was delighted to see that the insides were as clean as the outsides. The entrances were well swept, the floors were beautifully smeared with cowdung, and the few pots and pans were clean and shining. There was no fear of an outbreak in those quarters.

In the upper class quarters we came across a latrine which I cannot help describing in some detail. Every room had its gutter, which was used both for water and urine, which meant that the whole house would stink. But one of the houses had a storeyed bedroom with a gutter which was being used both as a urinal and a latrine. The gutter had a pipe descending to the ground floor. It was not possible to stand the foul smell in this room. How the occupant could sleep there I leave readers to imagine.

The committee also visited the Vaishnava *Haveli*. The priest in charge of the *Haveli* was very friendly with my family. So he agreed to let us inspect everything and suggest whatever improvements we liked. There was a part of the *Haveli* premises that he himself had never seen. It was the place where refuse and leaves used as dinnerplates used to be thrown over the wall. It was the haunt of crows and kites. The latrines were of course dirty. I was not long enough in Rajkot to see how many of our suggestions the priest carried out.

It pained me to see so much uncleanness about a place of worship. One would expect a careful observance of the rules of sanitation and hygiene in a place which is regarded as holy. The authors of the *Smritis*, as I knew even then, have laid the greatest emphasis on cleanliness both inward and outward.

26. TWO PASSIONS

Hardly ever have I known anybody to cherish such loyalty as I did to the British Constitution. I can see now that my love of truth was at the root of this loyalty. It has never been possible for me to simulate loyalty, or for that matter any other virtue. The National Anthem used to be sung at every meeting that I attended in Natal. I then felt that I must also join

in the singing. Not that I was unaware of the defects in British rule, but I thought it was on the whole acceptable. In those days I believed that British rule was on the whole beneficial to the ruled.

The colour prejudice that I saw in South Africa was, I thought, quite contrary to British traditions, and I believed that it was only temporary and local. I therefore vied with Englishmen in loyalty to the throne. With careful perseverance I learnt the tune of the National Anthem, and joined in the singing whenever it was sung. Whenever there was an occasion for the expression of loyalty without fuss or ostentation, I readily took part in it.

Never in my life did I exploit this loyalty, never did I seek to gain a selfish end by its means. It was for me more in the nature of an obligation, and I rendered it without expecting a reward.

Preparations were going on for the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee when I reached India. I was invited to join the committee appointed for the purpose in Rajkot. I accepted the offer, but had a suspicion that the celebrations would be largely a matter of show. I discovered much humbug about them, and was considerably pained. I began to ask myself whether I should remain on the committee or not, but ultimately decided to rest content with doing my part of the business.

One of the proposals was to plant trees. I saw that many did it merely for show and for pleasing the officials. I tried to plead with them that tree-planting was not compulsory, but merely a suggestion. It should be done seriously or not at all. I have an impression that they laughed at my ideas. I remember that I was in earnest when I planted the tree allotted to me, and that I carefully watered and tended it.

I likewise taught the National Anthem to the children of my family. I recollect having taught it to students of the local Training College, but I forget whether it was on the occasion of the Jubilee or of King Edward VII's coronation as Emperor of India. Later on the text began to jar on me. As my conception of *ahimsa* went on maturing, I became more vigilant about my thought and speech. The lines in the Anthem:

'Scatter her enemies,
And make them fail;
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks'

particularly jarred upon my sentiment of *ahimsa*. I shared my feelings with Dr. Booth, who agreed that it ill became a believer in *ahimsa* to sing those lines. How could we assume that the so-called 'enemies' were 'knavish'? And because they were enemies, were they bound to be in the

wrong? From God we could only ask for justice. Dr. Booth entirely endorsed my sentiments, and composed a new anthem for his congregation. But of Dr. Booth more later.

Like loyalty, an aptitude for nursing was also deeply rooted in my nature. I was fond of nursing people, whether friends or strangers.

Whilst busy in Rajkot with the pamphlet on South Africa, I had an occasion to pay a flying visit to Bombay. It was my intention to educate public opinion in cities on this question by organizing meetings, and Bombay was the first city I chose. First of all I met Justice Ranade, who listened to me with attention, and advised me to meet Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. Justice Badruddin Tyabji, whom I met next, also gave me the same advice. 'Justice Ranade and I can guide you but little,' he said. 'You know our position. We cannot take an active part in public affairs, but our sympathies are with you. The man who can effectively guide you is Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.'

I certainly wanted to see Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, but the fact that these senior men advised me to act according to his advice gave me a better idea of the immense influence that Sir Pherozeshah had on the public. In due course I met him. I was prepared to be awed by his presence. I had heard of the popular titles that he had earned, and knew that I was to see the 'Lion of Bombay', the 'Uncrowned King of the Presidency'. But the king did not overpower me. He met me as a loving father would meet his grown up son. Our meeting took place at his chamber. He was surrounded by a circle of friends and followers. Amongst them were Mr. D. E. Wacha and Mr. Cama, to whom I was introduced. I had already heard of Mr. Wacha. He was regarded as the right-hand man of Sir Pherozeshah, and Sjt. Virchand Gandhi had described him to me as a great statistician. Mr. Wacha said, 'Gandhi, we must meet again.'

These introductions could scarcely have taken two minutes. Sir Pherozeshah carefully listened to me. I told him that I had seen Justices Ranade and Tyabji. 'Gandhi,' said he, 'I see that I must help you. I must call a public meeting here.' With this he turned to Mr. Munshi, the secretary, and told him to fix up the date of the meeting. The date was settled, and he bade me good-bye, asking me to see him again on the day previous to the meeting. The interview removed my fears, and I went home delighted.

During this stay in Bombay I called on my brother-in-law, who was staying there and lying ill. He was not a man of means, and my sister (his wife) was not equal to nursing him. The illness was serious, and I offered to take him to Rajkot. He agreed, and so I returned home with my sister

and her husband. The illness was much more prolonged than I had expected. I put my brother-in-law in my room and remained with him night and day. I was obliged to keep awake part of the night, and had to get through some of my South African work whilst I was nursing him. Ultimately, however, the patient died, but it was a great consolation to me that I had had an opportunity to nurse him during his last days.

My aptitude for nursing gradually developed into a passion, so much so that it often led me to neglect my work, and on occasions I engaged not only my wife but the whole household in such service.

Such service can have no meaning unless one takes pleasure in it. When it is done for show or for fear of public opinion, it stunts the man and crushes his spirit. Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.

27. THE BOMBAY MEETING

On the very day after my brother-in-law's death I had to go to Bombay for the public meeting. There had hardly been time for me to think out my speech. I was feeling exhausted after days and nights of anxious vigil, and my voice had become husky. However, I went to Bombay trusting entirely to God. I had never dreamt of writing out my speech.

In accordance with Sir Pherozeshah's instructions I reported myself at his office at 5 p.m. on the eve of the meeting.

'Is your speech ready, Gandhi?' he asked.

'No, sir,' said I, trembling with fear, 'I think of speaking *ex tempore*.'

'That will not do in Bombay. Reporting here is bad, and if we would benefit by this meeting, you should write out your speech, and it should be printed before daybreak tomorrow. I hope you can manage this?'

I felt rather nervous, but I said I would try.

'Then, tell me, what time should Mr. Munshi come to you for the manuscript?'

'Eleven o'clock tonight,' said I.

On going to the meeting the next day, I saw the wisdom of Sir Pherozeshah's advice. The meeting was held in the hall of the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Institute. I had heard that when Sir Pherozeshah Mehta addressed meetings the hall was always packed, chiefly by the students intent on hearing him, leaving not an inch of room. This was the first meeting of the kind in my experience. I saw that my voice could reach only a few. I was trembling as I began to read my speech. Sir Pherozeshah cheered me

up continually by asking me to speak louder and still louder. I have a feeling that far from encouraging me, it made my voice sink lower and lower.

My old friend Sjt. Keshavrao Deshpande came to my rescue. I handed my speech to him. His was just the proper voice. But the audience refused to listen. The hall rang with the cries of 'Wacha', 'Wacha'. So Mr. Wacha stood up and read the speech, with wonderful results. The audience became perfectly quiet, and listened to the speech to the end, punctuating it with applause and cries of 'shame' where necessary. This gladdened my heart.

Sir Pherozechah liked the speech. I was supremely happy.

The meeting won me the active sympathy of Sjt. Deshpande and a Parsi friend, whose name I hesitate to mention, as he is a high-placed Government official today. Both expressed their resolve to accompany me to South Africa. Mr. C. M. Cursetji, who was then Small Causes Court judge, however, moved the Parsi friend from his resolve, as he had plotted his marriage. He had to choose between marriage and going to South Africa, and he chose the former. But Parsi Rustomji made amends for the broken resolve, and a number of Parsi sisters are now making amends for the lady who helped in the breach, by dedicating themselves to Khadi work. I have therefore gladly forgiven that couple. Sjt. Deshpande had no temptations of marriage, but he too could not come. Today he is himself doing enough reparation for the broken pledge. On my way back to South Africa I met one of the Tyabjis at Zanzibar. He also promised to come and help me, but never came. Mr. Abbas Tyabji is atoning for that offence. Thus none of my three attempts to induce barristers to go to South Africa bore any fruit.

In this connection I remember Mr. Pestonji Padshah. I had been on friendly terms with him ever since my stay in England. I first met him in a vegetarian restaurant in London. I knew of his brother Mr. Barjorji Padshah by his reputation as a 'crank'. I had never met him, but friends said that he was eccentric. Out of pity for the horses he would not ride in tramcars, he refused to take degrees in spite of a prodigious memory, he had developed an independent spirit, and he was a vegetarian, though a Parsi. Pestonji had not quite this reputation, but he was famous for his erudition even in London. The common factor between us, however, was vegetarianism, and not scholarship, in which it was beyond my power to approach him.

I found him out again in Bombay. He was Protonotary in the High Court. When I met him he was engaged on his contribution to a Higher Gujarati Dictionary. There was not a friend I had not approached for help

in my South African work. Pestonji Padshah, however, not only refused to aid me, but even advised me not to return to South Africa.

‘It is impossible to help you,’ he said, ‘But I tell you I do not like even your going to South Africa. Is there lack of work in our own country? Look, now, there is not a little to do for our language. I have to find out scientific words. But this is only one branch of the work. Think of the poverty of the land. Our people in South Africa are no doubt in difficulty, but I do not want a man like you to be sacrificed for that work. Let us win self-government here and we shall automatically help our countrymen there. I know I cannot prevail upon you, but I will not encourage any one of your type to throw in his lot with you.’

I did not like this advice, but it increased my regard for Mr. Pestonji Padshah. I was struck with his love for the country and for the mother tongue. The incident brought us closer to each other. I could understand his point of view. But far from giving up my work in South Africa. I became firmer in my resolve. A patriot cannot afford to ignore any branch of service to the mother land. And for me the text of the Gita was clear and emphatic:

‘Finally, this is better, that one do
His own task as he may, even though he fail,
Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good.
To die performing duty is no ill:
But who seeks other roads shall wander still.’

28. POONA AND MADRAS

Sir Pherozeshah had made my way easy. So from Bombay I went to Poona. Here there were two parties. I wanted the help of people of every shade of opinion. First I met Lokamanya Tilak. He said:

‘You are quite right in seeking the help of all parties. There can be no difference of opinion on the South African question. But you must have a non-party man for your president. Meet Professor Bhandarkar. He has been taking no part of late in any public movement. But this question might possibly draw him out. See him and let me know what he says. I want to help you to the fullest extent. Of course you will meet me whenever you like. I am at your disposal.’

This was my first meeting with the Lokamanya. It revealed to me the secret of his unique popularity.

Next I met Gokhale. I found him on the Fergusson College grounds. He gave me an affectionate welcome, and his manner immediately won

my heart. With him too this was my first meeting, and yet it seemed as though we were renewing an old friendship. Sir Pherozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalaya, the Lokamanya like the ocean. But Gokhale was as the Ganges. One could have a refreshing bath in the holy river. The Himalaya was unscaleable, and one could not easily launch forth on the sea, but the Ganges invited one to its bosom. It was a joy to be on it with a boat and an oar. Gokhale closely examined me, as a schoolmaster would examine a candidate seeking admission to a school. He told me whom to approach and how to approach them. He asked to have a look at my speech. He showed me over the college, assured me that he was always at my disposal, asked me to let him know the result of the interview with Dr. Bhandarkar, and sent me away exultantly happy. In the sphere of politics the place that Gokhale occupied in my heart during his lifetime and occupies even now was and is absolutely unique.

Dr. Bhandarkar received me with the warmth of a father. It was noon when I called on him. The very fact that I was busy seeing people at that hour appealed greatly to this indefatigable savant, and my insistence on a non-party man for the president of the meeting had his ready approval, which was expressed in the spontaneous exclamation, 'That's it, that's it.'

After he had heard me out he said: 'Anyone will tell you that I do not take part in politics. But I cannot refuse you. Your case is so strong and your industry is so admirable that I cannot decline to take part in your meeting. You did well in consulting Tilak and Gokhale. Please tell them that I shall be glad to preside over the meeting to be held under the joint auspices of the two Sabhas. You need not have the time of the meeting from me. Any time that suits them will suit me.' With this he bade me good-bye with congratulations and blessings.

Without any ado this erudite and selfless band of workers in Poona held a meeting in an unostentatious little place, and sent me away rejoicing and more confident of my mission.

I next proceeded to Madras. It was wild enthusiasm. The Balasundaram incident made a profound impression on the meeting. My speech was printed and was, for me, fairly long. But the audience listened to every word with attention. At the close of the meeting there was a regular run on the 'Green Pamphlet'. I brought out a second and revised edition of 10,000 copies. They sold like hot cakes, but I saw that it was not necessary to print such a large number. In my enthusiasm I had overcalculated the demand. It was the English-speaking public to which

my speech had been addressed, and in Madras that class alone could not take the whole ten thousand.

The greatest help here came to me from the late Sjt. G. Parameshvaran Pillay, the editor of *The Madras Standard*. He had made a careful study of the question, and he often invited me to his office and gave me guidance. Sjt. G. Subrahmaniam of *The Hindu* and D.r Subrahmaniam also were very sympathetic. But Sjt. G. Parameshvaran Pillay placed the columns of *The Madras Standard* entirely at my disposal, and I freely availed myself of the offer. The meeting in Pachaiaappa's Hall, so far as I can recollect, was with Dr. Subrahmaniam in the chair.

The affection showered on me by most of the friends I met, and their enthusiasm for the cause, were so great that in spite of my having to communicate with them in English, I felt myself entirely at home. What barrier is here that love cannot break?

29. 'RETURN SOON'

From Madras I proceeded to Calcutta, where I found myself hemmed in by difficulties. I knew no one there. So I took a room in the Great Eastern Hotel. Here I became acquainted with Mr. Ellerthorpe, a representative of *The Daily Telegraph*. He invited me to the Bengal Club, where he was staying. He did not then realize that an Indian could not be taken to the drawing-room of the Club. Having discovered the restriction, he took me to his room. He expressed his sorrow regarding this prejudice of the local Englishmen, and apologized to me for not having been able to take me to the drawing-room.

I had of course to see Surendranath Banerji, the 'Idol of Bengal'. When I met him, he was surrounded by a number of friends. He said:

'I am afraid people will not take interest in your work. As you know, our difficulties here are by no means few. But you must try as best you can. You will have to enlist the sympathy of Maharajas. Mind you meet the representatives of the British Indian Association. You should meet Raja Sir Pyarimohan Mukarji and Maharaja Tagore. Both are liberal-minded and take a fair share in public work.'

I met these gentlemen, but without success. Both gave me a cold reception and said it was no easy thing to call a public meeting in Calcutta, and if anything could be done, it would practically all depend on Surendranath Banerji.

I saw that my task was becoming more and more difficult, I called at the office of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. The gentleman whom I met there

took me to be a wandering Jew. *The Bangabasi* went even one better. The editor kept me waiting for an hour. He had evidently many interviewers, but he would not so much as look at me, even when he had disposed of the rest. On my venturing to broach my subject after the long wait he said: 'Don't you see our hands are full? There is no end to the number of visitors like you. You had better go. I am not disposed to listen to you.' For a moment I felt offended, but I quickly understood the editor's position. I had heard of the fame of *The Bangabasi*. I could see that there was a regular stream of visitors there. And they were all people acquainted with him. His paper had no lack of topics to discuss, and South Africa was hardly known at that time.

However serious a grievance may be in the eyes of the man who suffers from it, he will be but one of the numerous people invading the editor's office, each with a grievance of his own. How is the editor to meet them all? Moreover, the aggrieved party imagines that the editor is a power in the land. Only he knows that his powers can hardly travel beyond the threshold of his office. But I was not discouraged. I kept on seeing editors of other papers. As usual I met the Anglo-Indian editors also. *The Statesman* and *The Englishman* realized the importance of the question. I gave them long interviews, and they published them in full.

Mr. Saunders, editor of *The Englishman*, claimed me as his own. He placed his office and paper at my disposal. He even allowed me the liberty of making whatever changes I liked in the leading article he had written on the situation, the proof of which he sent me in advance. It is no exaggeration to say that a friendship grew up between us. He promised to render me all the help he could, carried out the promise to the letter, and kept on his correspondence with me until the time when he was seriously ill.

Throughout my life I have had the privilege of many such friendships, which have sprung up quite unexpectedly. What Mr. Saunders liked in me was my freedom from exaggeration and my devotion to truth. He subjected me to a searching cross-examination before he began to sympathize with my cause, and he saw that I had spared neither will nor pains to place before him an impartial statement of the case even of the white man in South Africa and also to appreciate it.

My experience has shown me that we win justice quickest by rendering justice to the other party.

The unexpected help of Mr. Saunders had begun to encourage me to think that I might succeed after all in holding a public meeting in Calcutta,

when I received the following cable from Durban 'Parliament opens January. Return soon.'

So I addressed a letter to the Press, in which I explained why I had to leave Calcutta so abruptly, and set off for Bombay. Before starting I wired to the Bombay agent of Dada Abdulla and Co., to arrange for my passage by the first possible boat to South Africa. Dada Abdulla had just then purchased the steamship *Courland* and insisted on my travelling on that boat, offering to take me and my family free of charge. I gratefully accepted the offer, and in the beginning of December set sail a second time for South Africa, now with my wife and two sons and the only son of my widowed sister. Another steamship, *Naderi*, also sailed for Durban at the same time. The agents of the Company were Dada Abdulla and Co. The total number of passengers these boats carried must have been about eight hundred, half of whom were bound for the Transvaal.

PART THREE

1. RUMBLINGS OF THE STORM

This was my first voyage with my wife and children. I have often observed in the course of this narrative that on account of child marriages amongst middle class Hindus, the husband will be literate whilst the wife remains practically unlettered. A wide gulf thus separates them, and the husband has to become his wife's teacher. So I had to think out the details of the dress to be adopted by my wife and children, the food they were to eat, and the manners which would be suited to their new surroundings. Some of the recollections of those days are amusing to look back upon.

A Hindu wife regards implicit obedience to her husband as the highest religion. A Hindu husband regards himself as lord and master of his wife, who must ever dance attendance upon him.

I believed, at the time of which I am writing, that in order to look civilized, our dress and manners had, as far as possible, to approximate to the European standard. Because, I thought, only thus could we have some influence, and without influence it would not be possible to serve the community.

I therefore determined the style of dress for my wife and children. How could I like them to be known as Kathiawad Baniyas? The Parsis used then to be regarded as the most civilized people amongst Indians, and so, when the complete European style seemed to be unsuited, we adopted the Parsi style. Accordingly my wife wore the Parsi sari, and the boys the Parsi coat and trousers. Of course no one could be without shoes and stockings. It was long before my wife and children could get used to them. The shoes cramped their feet and the stockings stank with perspiration. The toes often got sore. I always had my answers ready to all these objections. But I have an impression that it was not so much the answers as the force of authority that carried conviction. They agreed to the changes in dress, as there was no alternative. In the same spirit and

with even more reluctance they adopted the use of knives and forks. When my infatuation for these signs of civilization wore away, they gave up the knives and forks. After having become long accustomed to the new style, it was perhaps no less irksome for me to return to the original mode. But I can see today that we feel all the freer and lighter for having cast off the tinsel of 'civilization'.

On board the same steamer with us were some relatives and acquaintances. These and other deck passengers I frequently met, because, the boat belonging to my client's friends, I was free to move about anywhere and everywhere I liked.

Since the steamer was making straight for Natal, without calling at intermediate ports, our voyage was of only eighteen days. But as though to warn us of the coming real storm on land, a terrible gale overtook us whilst we were only four days from Natal. December is a summer month of monsoon in the southern hemisphere, and gales, great and small, are therefore quite common in the Southern sea at that season. The gale in which we were caught was so violent and prolonged that the passengers became alarmed. It was a solemn scene. All became one in face of the common danger. They forgot their differences and began to think of the one and only God—Musalmans, Hindus, Christians and all. Some took various vows. The captain also joined the passengers in their prayers. He assured them that though the storm was not without danger, he had had experience of many worse ones, and explained to them that a well-built ship could stand almost any weather. But they were inconsolable. Every minute were heard sounds and crashes which foreboded breaches and leaks. The ship rocked and rolled to such an extent that it seemed as though she would capsize at any moment. It was out of the question for anyone to remain on deck. 'His will be done' was the only cry on every lip. So far as I can recollect, we must have been in this plight for about twenty-four hours. At last the sky cleared, the sun made its appearance, and the captain said that the storm had blown over. People's faces beamed with gladness, and with the disappearance of danger disappeared also the name of God from their lips. Eating and drinking, singing and merry-making again became the order of the day. The fear of death was gone, and the momentary mood of earnest prayer gave place to *maya*.¹ There were of course the usual *namaz*² and the prayers, yet they had none of the solemnity of that dread hour.

1. The famous word in Hindu philosophy which is nearly untranslatable, but has been frequently translated in English as 'delusion', 'illusion'.

2. The prayer prescribed by the Qur'an.

But the storm had made me one with the passengers. I had little fear of the storm, for I had had experience of similar ones. I am a good sailor and do not get sea-sick. So I could fearlessly move amongst the passengers, bringing them comfort and good cheer, and conveying to them hourly reports of the captain. The friendship I thus formed stood me, as we shall see, in very good stead.

The ship cast anchor in the port of Durban on the 18th or 19th of December. The *Naderi* also reached the same day.

But the real storm was still to come.

2. THE STORM

We have seen that the two ships cast anchor in the port of Durban on or about the 18th December. No passengers are allowed to land at any of the South African ports before being subjected to a thorough medical examination. If the ship has any passenger suffering from a contagious disease, she has to undergo a period of quarantine. As there had been plague in Bombay when we set sail, we feared that we might have to go through a brief quarantine. Before the examination every ship has to fly a yellow flag, which is lowered only when the doctor has certified her to be healthy. Relatives and friends of passengers are allowed to come on board only after the yellow flag has been lowered.

Accordingly our ship was flying the yellow flag, when the doctor came and examined us. He ordered a five days' quarantine because, in his opinion, plague germs took twenty-three days at the most to develop. Our ship was therefore ordered to be put in quarantine until the twenty-third day of our sailing from Bombay. But this quarantine order had more than health reasons behind it.

The white residents of Durban had been agitating for our repatriation, and the agitation was one of the reasons for the order. Dada Abdulla and Co. kept us regularly informed about the daily happenings in the town. The whites were holding monster meetings every day. They were addressing all kinds of threats, and at times offering even inducements, to Dada Abdulla and Co. They were ready to indemnify the Company if both the ships should be sent back. But Dada Abdulla and Co. were not the people to be afraid of threats. Sheth Abdul Karim Haji Adam was then the managing partner of the firm. He was determined to moor the ships at the wharf and disembark the passengers at any cost. He was daily sending me detailed letters. Fortunately the late Sjt. Mansukhlal Naazar was then in Durban, having gone there to meet me. He was capable and

fearless, and guided the Indian community. Their advocate Mr. Laughton was an equally fearless man. He condemned the conduct of the white residents, and advised the community not merely as their paid advocate, but also as their true friend.

Thus Durban had become the scene of an unequal duel. On one side there was a handful of poor Indians and a few of their English friends, and on the other were ranged the white men, strong in arms, in numbers, in education, and in wealth. They had also the backing of the State, for the Natal Government openly helped them. Mr. Harry Escombe, who was the most influential of the members of the Cabinet, openly took part in their meetings.

The real object of the quarantine was thus to coerce the passengers into returning to India by somehow intimidating them or the Agent Company. For now threats began to be addressed to us also: 'If you do not go back, you will surely be pushed into the sea. But if you consent to return, you may even get your passage money back.' I constantly moved amongst my fellow passengers cheering them up. I also sent messages of comfort to the passengers of the *s.s. Naderi*. All of them kept calm and courageous.

We arranged all sorts of games on the ship for the entertainment of the passengers. On Christmas Day the captain invited the saloon passengers to dinner. The principal among these were my family and I. In the speeches after dinner I spoke on Western civilization. I knew that this was not an occasion for a serious speech. But mine could not be otherwise. I took part in the merriment, but my heart was in the combat that was going on in Durban. For I was the real target. There were two charges against me:

(1) that whilst in India I had indulged in unmerited condemnation of the Natal whites;

(2) that with a view to swamping Natal Indians I had specially brought the two shiploads of passengers to settle there.

I was conscious of my responsibility. I knew that Dada Abdulla and Co. had incurred grave risks on my account, the lives of the passengers were in danger, and by bringing my family with me I had put them likewise in jeopardy.

But I was absolutely innocent. I had induced no one to go to Natal. I did not know the passengers when they embarked. And with the exception of a couple of relatives, I did not know the name and address of even one of the hundreds of passengers on board. Neither had I said, whilst in

India, a word about the whites in Natal that I had not already said in Natal itself. And I had ample evidence in support of all that I had said.

I therefore deplored the civilization of which the Natal whites were the fruit, and which they represented and championed. This civilization had all along been on my mind, and I therefore offered my views concerning it in my speech before that little meeting. The captain and other friends gave me a patient hearing, and received my speech in the spirit in which it was made. I do not know that it in any way affected the course of their lives, but afterwards I had long talks with the captain and other officers regarding the civilization of the West. I had in my speech described Western civilization as being, unlike the Eastern, predominantly based on force. The questioners pinned me to my faith, and one of them—the captain, so far as I can recollect—said to me:

‘Supposing the whites carry out their threats, how will you stand by your principle of non-violence?’ To which I replied: ‘I hope God will give me the courage and the sense to forgive them and to refrain from bringing them to law. I have no anger against them. I am only sorry for their ignorance and their narrowness. I know that they sincerely believe that what they are doing today is right and proper. I have no reason therefore to be angry with them.’

The questioner smiled, possibly distrustfully.

Thus the days dragged on their weary length. When the quarantine would terminate was still uncertain. The quarantine officer said that the matter had passed out of his hands, and that as soon as he had orders from the Government, he would permit us to land.

At last ultimatums were served on the passengers and me. We were asked to submit, if we would escape with our lives. In our reply the passengers and I both maintained our right to land at Port Natal, and intimated our determination to enter Natal at any risk.

At the end of twenty-three days the ships were permitted to enter the harbour, and orders permitting the passengers to land were passed.

3. THE TEST

So the ships were brought into the dock and the passengers began to go ashore. But Mr. Escombe had sent word to the captain that, as the whites were highly enraged against me and my life was in danger, my family and I should be advised to land at dusk, when the port superintendent Mr. Tatum would escort us home. The captain communicated the message to me, and I agreed to act accordingly. But

scarcely half an hour after this, Mr. Laughton came to the captain. He said: 'I would like to take Mr. Gandhi with me, should he have no objection. As the legal adviser of the Agent Company I tell you that you are not bound to carry out the message you have received from Mr. Escombe.' After this he came to me and said somewhat to this effect: 'If you are not afraid, I suggest that Mrs. Gandhi and the children should drive to Mr. Rustomji's house, whilst you and I follow them on foot. I do not at all like the idea of your entering the city like a thief in the night. I do not think there is any fear of anyone hurting you. Everything is quiet now. The whites have all dispersed. But in any case I am convinced that you ought not to enter the city stealthily.' I readily agreed. My wife and children drove safely to Mr. Rustomji's place. With the captain's permission I went ashore with Mr. Laughton. Mr. Rustomji's house was about two miles from the dock.

As soon as we landed, some youngsters recognized me and shouted 'Gandhi, Gandhi.' About half a dozen men rushed to the spot and joined in the shouting. Mr. Laughton feared that the crowd might swell, and hailed a rickshaw. I had never liked the idea of being in a rickshaw. This was to be my first experience. But the youngsters would not let me get into it. They frightened the rickshaw boy out of his life, and he took to his heels. As we went ahead, the crowd continued to swell, until it became impossible to proceed further. They first caught hold of Mr. Laughton and separated us. Then they pelted me with stones, brickbats, and rotten eggs. Someone snatched away my turban, whilst others began to batter and kick me. I fainted, and caught hold of the front railings of a house and stood there to get my breath. But it was impossible. They came upon me, boxing and battering. The wife of the police superintendent, who knew me, happened to be passing by. The brave lady came up, opened her parasol though there was no sun then, and stood between the crowd and me. This checked the fury of the mob, as it was difficult for them to deliver blows on me without harming Mrs. Alexander.

Meanwhile an Indian youth who witnessed the incident had run to the police station. The police superintendent, Mr. Alexander, sent a posse of men to ring me round and escort me safely to my destination. They arrived in time. The police station lay on our way. As we reached there, the superintendent asked me to take refuge in the station, but I gratefully declined the offer. 'They are sure to quiet down when they realize their mistake,' I said 'I have trust in their sense of fairness.' Escorted by the police, I arrived without further harm at Mr. Rustomji's place. I had bruises

all over, but no abrasions except in one place. Dr. Dadibarjor, the ship's doctor, who was on the spot, rendered the best possible help.

There was quiet inside, but outside the whites surrounded the house. Night was coming on, and the yelling crowd was shouting, 'We must have Gandhi.' The quick-sighted police superintendent was already there, trying to keep the crowds under control not by threats, but by humouring them. But he was not entirely free from anxiety. He sent me a message to this effect: 'If you would save your friend's house and property and also your family, you should escape from the house in disguise, as I suggest.'

Thus on one and the same day I was faced with two contradictory positions. When danger to life had been no more than imaginary, Mr. Laughton advised me to launch forth openly. I accepted the advice. When the danger was quite real, another friend gave me the contrary advice, and I accepted that too. Who can say whether I did so because I saw that my life was in jeopardy, or because I did not want to put my friend's life and property or the lives of my wife and children in danger? Who can say for certain that I was right both when I faced the crowd in the first instance bravely, as it was said, and when I escaped from it in disguise?

It is idle to adjudicate upon the right and wrong of incidents that have already happened. It is useful to understand them and, if possible, to learn a lesson from them for the future. It is difficult to say for certain how a particular man would act in a particular set of circumstances. We can also see that judging a man from his outward act is no more than a doubtful inference, inasmuch as it is not based on sufficient data.

Be that as it may, the preparations for escape made me forget my injuries. As suggested by the superintendent, I put on an Indian constable's uniform and wore on my head a Madrasi scarf, wrapped round a plate to serve as a helmet. Two detectives accompanied me, one of them disguised as an Indian merchant and with his face painted to resemble that of an Indian. I forget the disguise of the other. We reached a neighbouring shop by a by-lane, and making our way through the gunny bags piled in the godown, escaped by the gate of the shop and threaded our way through the crowd to a carriage that had been kept for me at the end of the street. In this we drove off to the same police station where Mr. Alexander had offered me refuge a short time before, and I thanked him and the detective officers.

Whilst I had been thus effecting my escape, Mr Alexander had kept the crowd amused by singing the tune:

'Hang old Gandhi
On the sour apple tree.'

When he was informed of my safe arrival at the police station, he thus broke the news to the crowd: 'Well, your victim has made good his escape through a neighbouring shop. You had better go home now.' Some of them were angry, others laughed, some refused to believe the story.

'Well then,' said the superintendent, 'if you do not believe me, you may appoint one or two representatives, whom I am ready to take inside the house. If they succeed in finding out Gandhi, I will gladly deliver him to you. But if they fail, you must disperse. I am sure that you have no intention of destroying Mr. Rustomji's house or of harming Mr. Gandhi's wife and children.'

The crowd sent their representatives to search the house. They soon returned with disappointing news, and the crowd broke up at last, most of them admiring the superintendent's tactful handling of the situation, and a few fretting and fuming.

The late Mr. Chamberlain, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, cabled asking the Natal Government to prosecute my assailants. Mr. Escombe sent for me, expressed his regret for the injuries I had sustained, and said: 'Believe me, I cannot feel happy over the least little injury done to your person. You had a right to accept Mr. Laughton's advice and to face the worst, but I am sure that if you had considered my suggestion, these sad occurrences would not have happened. If you can identify the assailants, I am prepared to arrest and prosecute them. Mr. Chamberlain also desires me to do so.'

To which I gave the following reply:

'I do not want to prosecute anyone. It is possible that I may be able to identify one or two of them, but what is the use of getting them punished? Besides, I do not hold the assailants to blame. They were given to understand that I had made exaggerated statements in India about the whites in Natal and calumniated them. If they believed these reports, it is no wonder that they were enraged. The leaders and, if you will permit me to say so, you are to blame. You could have guided the people properly, but you also believed Reuter and assumed that I must have indulged in exaggeration. I do not want to bring any one to book. I am sure that, when the truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.'

'Would you mind giving me this in writing?' said Mr Escombe. 'Because I shall have to cable to Mr. Chamberlain to that effect. I do not want you to make any statement in haste. You may, if you like, consult Mr. Laughton and your other friends, before you come to a final decision. I may confess, however, that if you waive the right of bringing your

assailants to book, you will considerably help me in restoring quiet, besides enhancing your own reputation.'

'Thank you,' said I. 'I need not consult anyone. I had made my decision in the matter before I came to you. It is my conviction that I should not prosecute the assailants, and I am prepared this moment to reduce my decision to writing.'

With this I gave him the necessary statement.

4. THE CALM AFTER THE STORM

I had not yet left the police station, when after two days I was taken to see Mr. Escombe. Two constables were sent to protect me, though no such precaution was then needed.

On the day of landing, as soon as the yellow flag was lowered, a representative of *The Natal Advertiser* had come to interview me. He had asked me a number of questions, and in reply I had been able to refute every one of the charges that had been levelled against me. Thanks to Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, I had delivered only written speeches in India, and I had copies of them all, as well as of my other writings. I had given the interviewer all this literature and showed him that in India I had said nothing which I had not already said in South Africa in stronger language. I had also shown him that I had had no hand in bringing the passengers of the *Courland* and *Naderi* to South Africa. Many of them were old residents, and most of them, far from wanting to stay in Natal, meant to go to the Transvaal. In those days the Transvaal offered better prospects than Natal to those coming in search of wealth, and most Indians, therefore, preferred to go there.

This interview and my refusal to prosecute the assailants produced such a profound impression that the Europeans of Durban were ashamed of their conduct. The press declared me to be innocent and condemned the mob. Thus the lynching ultimately proved to be a blessing for me, that is, for the cause. It enhanced the prestige of the Indian community in South Africa and made my work easier.

In three or four days I went to my house, and it was not long before I settled down again. The incident added also to my professional practice.

But if it enhanced the prestige of the community, it also fanned the flame of prejudice against it. As soon as it was proved that the Indian could put up a manly fight, he came to be regarded as a danger. Two bills were introduced in the Natal Legislative Assembly, one of them calculated to affect the Indian trader adversely, and the other to impose a stringent

restriction on Indian immigration. Fortunately the fight for the franchise had resulted in a decision to the effect that no enactment might be passed against the Indians as such, that is to say, that the law should make no distinctions of colour or race. The language of the bills above mentioned made them applicable to all, but their object undoubtedly was to impose further restrictions on the Indian residents of Natal.

The bills considerably increased my public work and made the community more alive than ever to their sense of duty. They were translated into Indian languages and fully explained, so as to bring home to the community their subtle implications. We appealed to the Colonial Secretary, but he refused to interfere and the bills became law.

Public work now began to absorb most of my time. Sjt. Mansukhlal Naazar, who, as I have said, was already in Durban, came to stay with me, and as he gave his time to public work, he lightened my burden to some extent.

Sheth Adamji Miyakhan had, in my absence, discharged his duty with great credit. He had increased the membership and added about £1,000 to the coffers of the Natal Indian Congress. The awakening caused by the bills and the demonstration against the passengers I turned to good account by making an appeal for membership and funds, which now amounted to £5,000. My desire was to secure for the Congress a permanent fund, so that it might procure property of its own and then carry on its work out of the rent of the property. This was my first experience of managing a public institution. I placed my proposal before my co-workers, and they welcomed it. The property that was purchased was leased out, and the rent was enough to meet the current expenses of the Congress. The property was vested in a strong body of trustees and is still there today, but it has become the source of much internecine quarrelling, with the result that the rent of the property now accumulates in the court.

This sad situation developed after my departure from South Africa, but my idea of having permanent funds for public institutions underwent a change long before this difference arose. And now after considerable experience with the many public institutions which I have managed, it has become my firm conviction that it is not good to run public institutions on permanent funds. A permanent fund carries in itself the seed of the moral fall of the institution. A public institution means an institution conducted with the approval, and from the funds, of the public. When such an institution ceases to have public support, it forfeits its right to exist. Institutions maintained on permanent funds are often found to ignore public opinion, and are frequently responsible for acts contrary to it. In

our country we experience this at every step. Some of the so-called religious trusts have ceased to render any accounts. The trustees have become the owners, and are responsible to none. I have no doubt that the ideal is for public institutions to live, like nature, from day to day. The institution that fails to win public support has no right to exist as such. The subscriptions that an institution annually receives are a test of its popularity and the honesty of its management, and I am of opinion that every institution should submit to that test. But let no one misunderstand me. My remarks do not apply to the bodies which cannot, by their very nature, be conducted without permanent buildings. What I mean to say is that the current expenditure should be found from subscriptions voluntarily received from year to year.

These views were confirmed during the days of the Satyagraha in South Africa. That magnificent campaign, extending over six years, was carried on without permanent funds, though lakhs of rupees were necessary for it. I can recollect times when I did not know what would happen the next day if no subscriptions came in. But I shall not anticipate future events. The reader will find the opinion expressed above amply borne out in the coming narrative.

5. EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

When I landed at Durban in January 1897, I had three children with me, my sister's son ten years old, and my own sons nine and five years of age. Where was I to educate them?

I could have sent them to the schools for European children, but only as a matter of favour and exception. No other Indian children were allowed to attend them. For these there were schools established by Christian missions, but I was not prepared to send my children there, as I did not like the education imparted in those schools. For one thing, the medium of instruction would be only English, or perhaps incorrect Tamil or Hindi; this too could only have been arranged with difficulty. I could not possibly put up with this and other disadvantages. In the meantime I was making my own attempt to teach them. But that was at best irregular, and I could not get hold of a suitable Gujarati teacher.

I was at my wits' end. I advertised for an English teacher who should teach the children under my direction. Some regular instruction was to be given them by this teacher, and for the rest they should be satisfied with what little I could give them irregularly. So I engaged an English governess at £7 a month. This went on for some time, but not to my

satisfaction. The boys acquired some knowledge of Gujarai through my conversation and intercourse with them, which was strictly in the mother-tongue. I was loath to send them back to India, for I believed even then that young children should not be separated from their parents. The education that children naturally imbibe in a well-ordered household is impossible to obtain in hostels. I therefore kept my children with me. I did send my nephew and elder son to be educated at residential schools in India for a few months, but I soon had to recall them. Later the eldest son, long after he had come of age, broke away from me, and went to India to join a high school in Ahmedabad. I have an impression that the nephew was satisfied with what I could give him. Unfortunately he died in the prime of youth after a brief illness. The other three of my sons have never been at a public school, though they did get some regular schooling in an improvised school which I started for the children of Satyagrahi parents in South Africa.

These experiments were all inadequate. I could not devote to the children all the time I had wanted to give them. My inability to give them enough attention and other unavoidable causes prevented me from providing them with the literary education I had desired, and all my sons have had complaints to make against me in this matter. Whenever they come across an M.A. or a B.A., or even a matriculate, they seem to feel the handicap of a want of school education.

Nevertheless I am of opinion that if I had insisted on their being educated somehow at public schools, they would have been deprived of the training that can be had only at the school of experience, or from constant contact with the parents. I should never have been free, as I am today, from anxiety on their score, and the artificial education that they could have had in England or South Africa, torn from me, would never have taught them the simplicity and the spirit of service that they show in their lives today, while their artificial ways of living might have been a serious handicap in my public work. Therefore, though I have not been able to give them a literary education either to their or to my satisfaction, I am not quite sure, as I look back on my past years, that I have not done my duty by them to the best of my capacity. Nor do I regret not having sent them to public schools. I have always felt that the undesirable traits I see today in my eldest son are an echo of my own undisciplined and unformulated early life. I regard that time as a period of half-baked knowledge and indulgence. It coincided with the most impressionable years of my eldest son, and naturally he has refused to regard it as my time of indulgence and inexperience. He has on the contrary believed

that that was the brightest period of my life, and the changes effected later have been due to delusion, miscalled enlightenment. And well he might. Why should he not think that my earlier years represented a period of awakening, and the later years of radical change, years of delusion and egotism? Often have I been confronted with various posers from friends: What harm had there been, if I had given my boys an academical education? What right had I thus to clip their wings? Why should I have come in the way of their taking degrees and choosing their own careers?

I do not think that there is much point in these questions. I have come in contact with numerous students. I have tried myself, or through others, to impose my educational 'fads' on other children too, and have seen the results thereof. There are within my knowledge a number of young men today contemporaneous with my sons. I do not think that man to man they are any better than my sons, or that my sons have much to learn from them.

But the ultimate result of my experiments is in the womb of the future. My object in discussing this subject here is that a student of the history of civilization may have some measure of the difference between disciplined home education and school education, and so of the effect produced on children through changes introduced by parents in their lives. The purpose of this chapter is to show the lengths to which a votary of truth is driven by his experiments with truth, as also to show the votary of liberty how many are the sacrifices demanded by that stern goddess. Had I been without a sense of self-respect, and satisfied myself with having for my children the education that other children could not get, I should have deprived them of the object-lesson in liberty and self-respect that I gave them at the cost of the literary training. And where a choice has to be made between liberty and learning, who will not say that the former has to be preferred a thousand times to the latter?

The youths whom I called out in 1920 from those citadels of slavery—their schools and colleges—and whom I advised that it was far better to remain unlettered and break stones for the sake of liberty, than to go in for a literary education in the chains of slaves, will probably be able now to trace my advice to its source.

6. SPIRIT OF SERVICE

My profession progressed satisfactorily, but that was far from satisfying me. The question of further simplifying my life and of doing some concrete act of service to my fellow-men had been constantly

agitating me, when a leper came to my door. I had not the heart to dismiss him with a meal. So I offered him shelter, dressed his wounds, and began to look after him. But I could not go on like that indefinitely. I could not afford, I lacked the will, to keep him always with me. So I sent him to the government hospital for indentured labourers.

But I was still ill at ease. I longed for some humanitarian work of a permanent nature. Dr. Booth was the head of the St. Aidan's Mission. He was a kind-hearted man and treated his patients free. Thanks to Parsi Rustomji's charities, it was possible to open a small charitable hospital under Dr. Booth's charge. I felt strongly inclined to serve as a nurse in this hospital. The work of dispensing medicines took from one to two hours daily, and I made up my mind to find that time from my office-work, so as to be able to fill the place of a compounder in the dispensary attached to the hospital. Most of my professional work was chamber work, conveyancing, and arbitration. I of course used to have a few cases in the magistrate's court, but most of them were of a non-controversial character, and Mr. Khan, who had followed me to South Africa and was then living with me, undertook to take them if I was absent. So I found time to serve in the small hospital. This meant two hours every morning, including the time taken in going to and from the hospital. This work brought me some peace. It consisted in ascertaining the patient's complaints, laying the facts before the doctor, and dispensing the prescriptions. It brought me in close touch with suffering Indians, most of them indentured Tamil, Telugu, or North India men.

The experience stood me in good stead, when during the Boer War I offered my services for nursing the sick and wounded soldiers.

The question of the rearing of children had been ever before me. I had two sons born in South Africa, and my service in the hospital was useful in solving the question of their upbringing. My independent spirit was a constant source of trial. My wife and I had decided to have the best medical aid at the time of her delivery, but if the doctor and the nurse were to leave us in the lurch at the right moment, what was I to do? Then the nurse had to be an Indian. And the difficulty of getting a trained Indian nurse in South Africa can be easily imagined from the similar difficulty in India. So I studied the things necessary for safe labour. I read Dr. Tribhuvandas' book *Ma-ne Shikhaman*—'Advice to a Mother'—and I nursed both my children according to the instructions given in the book, tempered here and there by such experiences as I had gained elsewhere. The services of a nurse were utilized—not for more than two months

each time—chiefly for helping my wife, and not for taking care of the babies, which I did myself.

The birth of the last child put me to the severest test. The travail came on suddenly. The doctor was not immediately available, and some time was lost in fetching the midwife. Even if she had been on the spot, she could not have helped delivery. I had to see through the safe delivery of the baby. My careful study of the subject in Dr. Tribhuvandas' work was of inestimable help. I was not nervous.

I am convinced that for the proper upbringing of children, the parents ought to have a general knowledge of the care and nursing of babies. At every step I have seen the advantages of my careful study of the subject. My children would not have enjoyed the general health that they do today, had I not studied the subject and turned my knowledge to account. We labour under a sort of superstition that the child has nothing to learn during the first five years of its life. On the contrary, the fact is that the child never learns in after life what it does in its first five years. The education of the child begins with conception. The physical and mental states of the parents at the moment of conception are reproduced in the baby. Then during the period of pregnancy it continues to be affected by the mother's moods, desires, and temperament, as also by her ways of life. After birth the child imitates the parents, and for a considerable number of years entirely depends on them for its growth.

The couple who realize these things will never have sexual union for the fulfilment of their lust, but only when they desire issue. I think it is the height of ignorance to believe that the sexual act is an independent function necessary like sleeping or eating. The world depends for its existence on the act of generation, and as the world is the playground of God and a reflection of His glory, the act of generation should be controlled for the ordered growth of the world. He who realizes this will control his lust at any cost, equip himself with the knowledge necessary for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of his progeny, and give the benefit of that knowledge to posterity.

7. BRAHMACHARYA—I

We now reach the stage in this story when I began seriously to think of taking the *brahmacharya* vow. I had been wedded to a monogamous ideal ever since my marriage, faithfulness to my wife being part of the love of truth. But it was in South Africa that I came to realize the importance of observing *brahmacharya* even with respect to my wife. I

cannot definitely say what circumstance or what book it was that set my thoughts in that direction, but I have a recollection that the predominant factor was the influence of Raychandbhai, of whom I have already written. I can still recall a conversation that I had with him. On one occasion I spoke to him in high praise of Mrs. Gladstone's devotion to her husband. I had read somewhere that Mrs. Gladstone insisted on preparing tea for Mr. Gladstone even in the House of Commons, and that this had become a rule in the life of this illustrious couple, whose actions were governed by regularity. I spoke of this to the poet, and incidentally eulogized conjugal love. 'Which of the two do you prize more,' asked Raychandbhai, 'the love of Mrs. Gladstone for her husband as his wife, or her devoted service irrespective of her relation to Mr. Gladstone? Supposing she had been his sister, or his devoted servant, and ministered to him the same attention, what would you have said? Do we not have instances of such devoted sisters or servants? Supposing you had found the same loving devotion in a male servant, would you have been pleased in the same way as in Mrs. Gladstone's case? Just examine the viewpoint suggested by me.'

Raychandbhai was himself married. I have an impression that at the moment his words sounded harsh, but they gripped me irresistibly. The devotion of a servant was, I felt, a thousand times more praiseworthy than that of a wife to her husband. There was nothing surprising in the wife's devotion to her husband, as there was an indissoluble bond between them. The devotion was perfectly natural. But it required a special effort to cultivate equal devotion between master and servant. The poet's point of view began gradually to grow upon me.

What then, I asked myself, should be my relation with my wife? Did my faithfulness consist in making my wife the instrument of my lust? So long as I was the slave of lust, my faithfulness was worth noting. To be fair to my wife, I must say that she was never the temptress. It was therefore the easiest thing for me to take the vow of brahmacharya, if only I willed it. It was my weak will or lustful attachment that was the obstacle.

Even after my conscience had been roused in the matter, I failed twice. I failed because the motive that actuated the effort was none the highest. My main object was to escape having more children. Whilst in England I had read something about contraceptives. I have already referred to Dr. Allinson's birth control propaganda in the chapter on vegetarianism. If it had some temporary effect on me, Mr. Hills' opposition to those methods and his advocacy of internal effort as opposed to outward means, in a word, of self-control, had a far greater effect, which in due time

came to be abiding. Seeing, therefore, that I did not desire more children, I began to strive after self-control. There was endless difficulty in the task. We began to sleep in separate beds. I decided to retire to bed only after the day's work had left me completely exhausted. All these efforts did not seem to bear much fruit, but when I look back upon the past I feel that the final resolution was the cumulative effect of those unsuccessful strivings.

The final resolution could only be made as late as 1906. Satyagraha had not then been started. I had not the least notion of its coming. I was practising in Johannesburg at the time of the Zulu 'Rebellion' in Natal, which came soon after the Boer War. I felt that I must offer my services to the Natal Government on that occasion. The offer was accepted, as we shall see in another chapter. But the work set me furiously thinking in the direction of self-control, and according to my wont I discussed my thoughts with my co-workers. It became my conviction that procreation and the consequent care of children were inconsistent with public service. I had to break up my household at Johannesburg to be able to serve during the 'Rebellion'. Within one month of offering my services, I had to give up the house I had so carefully furnished. I took my wife and children to Phoenix, and led the Indian ambulance corps attached to the Natal forces. During the difficult marches that had then to be performed, the idea flashed upon me that if I wanted to devote myself to the service of the community in this manner, I must relinquish the desire for children and wealth and live the life of a *vanaprastha*—of one retired from household cares.

The 'Rebellion' did not occupy me for more than six weeks, but this brief period proved to be a very important epoch in my life. The importance of vows grew upon me more clearly than ever before. I realized that a vow, far from closing the door to real freedom, opened it. Up to this time I had not met with success because the will had been lacking, because I had had no faith in myself, no faith in the grace of God, and therefore my mind had been tossed on the boisterous sea of doubt. I realized that in refusing to take a vow man was drawn into temptation, and that to be bound by a vow was like a passage from libertinism to a real monogamous marriage. 'I believe in effort, I do not want to bind myself with vows' is the mentality of weakness, and betrays a subtle desire for the thing to be avoided. Or where can be the difficulty in making a final decision? I vow to flee from the serpent which I know will bite me, I do not simply make an effort to flee from him. I know that mere effort may mean certain death. Mere effort means ignorance of the certain fact that the serpent is bound to kill me. The fact, therefore, that I could rest

content with an effort only means that I have not yet clearly realized the necessity of definite action. 'But supposing my views are changed in the future, how can I bind myself by a vow?' Such a doubt often deters us. But that doubt also betrays a lack of clear perception that a particular thing must be renounced. That is why Nishkulanand has sung:

'Renunciation without aversion is not lasting.'

Where therefore the desire is gone, a vow of renunciation is the natural and inevitable fruit.

8. BRAHMACHARYA—II

After full discussion and mature deliberation, I took the vow in 1906. I had not shared my thoughts with my wife until then, but only consulted her at the time of taking the vow. She had no objection. But I had great difficulty in making the final resolve. I had not the necessary strength. How was I to control my passions? The elimination of carnal relationship with one's wife seemed then a strange thing. But I launched forth with faith in the sustaining power of God.

As I look back upon the twenty years of the vow, I am filled with pleasure and wonderment. The more or less successful practice of self-control had been going on since 1901. But the freedom and joy that came to me after taking the vow had never been experienced before 1906. Before the vow I had been open to being overcome by temptation at any moment. Now the vow was a sure shield against temptation. The great potentiality of *brahmacharya* daily became more and more patent to me. The vow was taken when I was in Phoenix. As soon as I was free from ambulance work, I went to Phoenix, whence I had to return to Johannesburg. In about a month of my returning there, the foundation of Satyagraha was laid. As though unknown to me, the *brahmacharyavow* had been preparing me for it. Satyagraha had not been a preconceived plan. It came on spontaneously, without my having willed it. But I could see that all my previous steps had led up to that goal. I had cut down my heavy household expenses at Johannesburg and gone to Phoenix to take, as it were, the *brahmacharya* vow.

The knowledge that a perfect observance of *brahmacharya* means realization of *brahman*, I did not owe to a study of the Shastras. It slowly grew upon me with experience. The shastric texts on the subject I read only later in life. Every day of the vow has taken me nearer the knowledge that in *brahmacharya* lies the protection of the body, the mind and the

soul. For *brahmachrya* was now no process of hard penance, it was a matter of consolation and joy. Every day revealed a fresh beauty in it.

But if it was a matter of ever-increasing joy, let no one believe that it was an easy thing for me. Even when I am past fifty-six years, I realize how hard a thing it is. Every day I realize more and more that it is like walking on the sword's edge, and I see every moment the necessity for eternal vigilance.

Control of the palate is the first essential in the observance of the vow. I found that complete control of the palate made the observance very easy, and so I now pursued my dietetic experiments not merely from the vegetarian's but also from the *brahmachari's* point of view. As the result of these experiments I saw that the *brahmachari's* food should be limited, simple, spiceless, and, if possible, uncooked.

Six years of experiment have showed me that the *brahmachari's* ideal food is fresh fruit and nuts. The immunity from passion that I enjoyed when I lived on this food was unknown to me after I changed that diet. *Brahmacharya* needed no effort on my part in South Africa when I lived on fruits and nuts alone. It has been a matter of very great effort ever since I began to take milk. How I had to go back to milk from a fruit diet will be considered in its proper place. It is enough to observe here that I have not the least doubt that milk diet makes the *brahmacharya* vow difficult to observe. Let no one deduce from this that all *brahmacharis* must give up milk. The effect on *brahmacharya* of different kinds of food can be determined only after numerous experiments. I have yet to find a fruit-substitute for milk which is an equally good muscle-builder and easily digestible. The doctors, *vaidyas*, and *hakims* have alike failed to enlighten me. Therefore, though I know milk to be partly a stimulant, I cannot, for the time being, advise anyone to give it up.

As an external aid to *brahmacharya*, fasting is as necessary as selection and restriction in diet. So overpowering are the senses that they can be kept under control only when they are completely hedged in on all sides, from above, and from beneath. It is common knowledge that they are powerless without food, and so fasting undertaken with a view to control of the senses is, I have no doubt, very helpful. With some, fasting is of no avail, because assuming that mechanical fasting alone will make them immune, they keep their bodies without food, but feast their minds upon all sorts of delicacies, thinking all the while what they will eat and what they will drink after the fast terminates. Such fasting helps them in controlling neither palate nor lust. Fasting is useful when mind co-operates with starving body, that is to say, when it cultivates a distaste for the

objects that are denied to the body. Mind is at the root of all sensuality. Fasting, therefore, has a limited use, for a fasting man may continue to be swayed by passion. But it may be said that extinction of the sexual passion is as a rule impossible without fasting, which may be said to be indispensable for the observance of *brahmacharya*. Many aspirants after *brahmacharya* fail because in the use of their other senses they want to carry on like those who are not *brahmacharis*. Their effort is, therefore, identical with the effort to experience the bracing cold of winter in the scorching summer months. There should be a clear line between the life of a *brahmachari* and of one who is not. The resemblance that there is between the two is only apparent. The distinction ought to be clear as daylight. Both use their eyesight, but whereas the *brahmachari* uses it to see the glories of God, the other uses it to see the frivolity around him. Both use their ears, but whereas the one hears nothing but praises of God, the other feasts his ears upon ribaldry. Both often keep late hours, but whereas the one devotes them to prayer, the other fritters them away in wild and wasteful mirth. Both feed the inner man, but the one only to keep the temple of God in good repair, while the other gorges himself and makes the sacred vessel a stinking gutter. Thus both live as the poles apart, and the distance between them will grow and not diminish with the passage of time.

Brahmacharya means control of the senses in thought, word, and deed. Every day I have been realizing more and more the necessity for restraints of the kind I have detailed above. There is no limit to the possibilities of renunciation, even as there is none to those of *brahmacharya*. Such *brahmacharya* is impossible of attainment by limited effort. For many it must remain only as an ideal. An aspirant after *brahmacharya* will always be conscious of his shortcomings, will seek out the passions lingering in the innermost recesses of his heart, and will incessantly strive to get rid of them. So long as thought is not under complete control of the will, *brahmacharya* in its fullness is absent. Involuntary thought is an affection of the mind, and curbing of thought therefore means curbing of the mind, which is even more difficult to curb than the wind. Nevertheless the existence of God within makes even control of the mind possible. Let no one think that it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal, and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it.

But it was after coming to India that I realized that such *brahmacharya* was impossible to attain by mere human effort. Until then I had been labouring under the delusion that fruit diet alone would enable

me to eradicate all passions, and I had flattered myself with the belief that I had nothing more to do.

But I must not anticipate the chapter of my struggles. Meanwhile let me make it clear that those who desire to observe *brahmacharya* with a view to realizing God need not despair, provided their faith in God is equal to their confidence in their own effort. 'The sense-objects turn away from an abstemious soul, leaving the relish behind. The relish also disappears with the realization of the Highest'.¹ Therefore His name and His grace are the last resources of the aspirant after *moksha*. This truth came to me only after my return to India.

9. SIMPLE LIFE

I had started on a life of ease and comfort, but the experiment was short-lived. Although I had furnished the house with care, yet it failed to have any hold on me. So no sooner had I launched forth on that life, than I began to cut down expenses. The washerman's bill was heavy, and as he was besides by no means noted for his punctuality, even two to three dozen shirts and collars proved insufficient for me. Collars had to be changed daily, and shirts if not daily at least every alternate day. This meant a double expense, which appeared to me unnecessary. So I equipped myself with a washing outfit to save it. I bought a book on washing, studied the art, and taught it also to my wife. This no doubt added to my work, but its novelty made it a pleasure.

I shall never forget the first collar that I washed myself. I had used more starch than necessary, the iron had not been made hot enough, and for fear of burning the collar I had not pressed it sufficiently. The result was that though the collar was fairly stiff, the superfluous starch continually dropped off it. I went to court with the collar on, thus inviting the ridicule of brother barristers, but even in those days I could be impervious to ridicule.

'Well,' said I, 'this is my first experiment at washing my own collars, and hence the loose starch. But it does not trouble me, and then there is the advantage of providing you with so much fun.'

'But surely there is no lack of laundries here?' asked a friend.

'The laundry bill is very heavy,' said I. 'The charge for washing a collar is almost as much as its price, and even then there is the eternal dependence on the washerman. I prefer by far to wash my things myself.'

1. The *Bhagavadgita*, 2-59.

But I could not make my friends appreciate the beauty of self-help. In course of time I became an expert washerman so far as my own work went, and my washing was by no means inferior to laundry washing. My collars were no less stiff or shiny than others.

When Gokhale came to South Africa, he had with him a scarf which was a gift from Mahadeo Govind Ranade. He treasured the memento with the utmost care and used it only on special occasions. One such occasion was the banquet given in his honour by the Johannesburg Indians. The scarf was creased and needed ironing. It was not possible to send it to the laundry and get it back in time. I offered to try my art.

‘I can trust your capacity as a lawyer, but not as a washerman,’ said Gokhale. ‘What if you should soil it? Do you know what it means to me?’

With this he narrated, with much joy, the story of the gift. I still insisted, guaranteed good work, got his permission to iron it, and won his certificate. After that I did not mind if the rest of the world refused me its certificate.

In the same way, as I freed myself from slavery to the washerman, I threw off dependence on the barber. All people who go to England learn there at least the art of shaving, but none, to my knowledge, learn to cut their own hair. I had to learn that too. I once went to an English hair-cutter in Pretoria. He contemptuously refused to cut my hair. I certainly felt hurt, but immediately purchased a pair of clippers and cut my hair before the mirror. I succeeded more or less in cutting the front hair, but I spoiled the back. The friends in the court shook with laughter.

‘What’s wrong with your hair, Gandhi? Rats have been at it?’

‘No. The white barber would not condescend to touch my black hair,’ said I, ‘so I preferred to cut it myself, no matter how badly.’

The reply did not surprise the friends.

The barber was not at fault in having refused to cut my hair. There was every chance of his losing his custom, if he should serve black men. We do not allow our barbers to serve our untouchable brethren. I got the reward of this in South Africa, not once but many times, and the conviction that it was the punishment for our own sins saved me from becoming angry.

The extreme forms in which my passion for self-help and simplicity ultimately expressed itself will be described in their proper place. The seed had been long sown. It only needed watering to take root, to flower, and to fructify, and the watering came in due course.

10. THE BOER WAR

I must skip many other experiences of the period between 1897 and 1899, and come straight to the Boer War.

When the war was declared, my personal sympathies were all with the Boers, but I believed then that I had yet no right, in such cases, to enforce my individual convictions. I have minutely dealt with the inner struggle regarding this in my history of the Satyagraha in South Africa, and I must not repeat the argument here. I invite the curious to turn to those pages. Suffice it to say that my loyalty to the British rule drove me to participation with the British in that war. I felt that if I demanded rights as a British citizen, it was also my duty, as such, to participate in the defence of the British Empire. I held then that India could achieve her complete emancipation only within and through the British Empire. So I collected together as many comrades as possible, and with very great difficulty got their services accepted as an ambulance corps.

The average Englishman believed that the Indian was a coward, incapable of taking risks or looking beyond his immediate self-interest. Many English friends, therefore, threw cold water on my plan. But Dr. Booth supported it whole-heartedly. He trained us in ambulance work. We secured medical certificates of fitness for service. Mr. Laughton and the late Mr. Escombe enthusiastically supported the plan, and we applied at last for service at the front. The government thankfully acknowledged our application, but said that our services were not then needed.

I would not rest satisfied, however, with this refusal. Through the introduction of Dr. Booth, I called on the Bishop of Natal. There were many Christian Indians in our Corps. The Bishop was delighted with my proposal, and promised to help us in getting our services accepted.

Time too was working with us. The Boer had shown more pluck, determination, and bravery than had been expected; and our services were ultimately needed.

Our corps was 1,100 strong, with nearly 40 leaders. About three hundred were free Indians, and the rest indentured. Dr. Booth was also with us. The corps acquitted itself well. Though our work was to be outside the firing line, and though we had the protection of the Red Cross, we were asked at a critical moment to serve within the firing line. The reservation had not been of our seeking. The authorities did not want us to be within the range of fire. The situation, however, was changed after the repulse at Spion Kop, and General Buller sent the message that, though we were not bound to take the risk, Government would be thankful if we would do so, and fetch the wounded from the field. We had no hesitation,

and so the action at Spion Kop found us working within the firing line. During these days we had to march from twenty to twenty-five miles a day, bearing the wounded on stretchers. Amongst the wounded we had the honour of carrying soldiers like General Woodgate.

The corps was disbanded after six weeks' service. After the reverses at Spion Kop and Vaalkranz, the British Commander-in-Chief abandoned the attempt to relieve Ladysmith and other places by summary procedure, and decided to proceed slowly, awaiting reinforcements from England and India.

Our humble work was at the moment much applauded, and the Indians' prestige was enhanced. The newspapers published laudatory rhymes with the refrain, 'We are sons of Empire after all.'

General Buller mentioned with appreciation the work of the corps in his despatch, and the leaders were awarded the War Medal.

The Indian community became better organized. I got into closer touch with the indentured Indians. There came a greater awakening amongst them, and the feeling that Hindus, Musalmans, Christians, Tamilians, Gujaratis, and Sindhis were all Indians and children of the same motherland took deep root amongst them. Everyone believed that the Indians' grievances were now sure to be redressed. At the moment the white man's attitude seemed to be distinctly changed. The relations formed with the whites during the war were of the sweetest. We had come in contact with thousands of tommies. They were friendly with us and thankful for being there to serve them.

I cannot forbear from recording a sweet reminiscence of how human nature shows itself at its best in moments of trial. We were marching towards Chieveley Camp where Lieutenant Roberts, the son of Lord Roberts, had received a mortal wound. Our corps had the honour of carrying the body from the field. It was a sultry day—the day of our march. Everyone was thirsting for water. There was a tiny brook on the way where we could slake our thirst. But who was to drink first? We had proposed to come in after the tommies had finished. But they would not begin first and urged us to do so, and for a while a pleasant competition went on for giving precedence to one another.

11. SANITARY REFORM AND FAMINE RELIEF

It has always been impossible for me to reconcile myself to any one member of the body politic remaining out of use. I have always been loath to hide or connive at the weak points of the community, or to press

for its rights without having purged it of its blemishes. Therefore ever since my settlement in Natal, I had been endeavouring to clear the community of a charge that had been levelled against it, not without a certain amount of truth. The charge had often been made that the Indian was slovenly in his habits and did not keep his house and surroundings clean. The principal men of the community had, therefore, already begun to put their houses in order, but house-to-house inspection was undertaken only when plague was reported to be imminent in Durban. This was done after consulting, and gaining the approval of, the city fathers, who had desired our co-operation. Our co-operation made work easier for them, and at the same time lessened our hardships. For whenever there is an outbreak of epidemics, the executive as a general rule get impatient, take excessive measures, and behave to such as may have incurred their displeasure with a heavy hand. The community saved itself from this oppression by voluntarily taking sanitary measures.

But I had some bitter experiences. I saw that I could not so easily count on the help of the community in getting it to do its own duty, as I could in claiming for its rights. At some places I met with insults, at others with polite indifference. It was too much for people to bestir themselves to keep their surroundings clean. To expect them to find money for the work was out of the question. These experiences taught me, better than ever before, that without infinite patience it was impossible to get the people to do any work. It is the reformer who is anxious for the reform, and not society, from which he should expect nothing better than opposition, abhorrence, and even mortal prosecution. Why may not society regard as retrogression what the reformer holds dear as life itself?

Nevertheless the result of this agitation was that the Indian community learnt to recognize more or less the necessity for keeping their houses and environments clean. I gained the esteem of the authorities. They saw that though I had made it my business to ventilate grievances and press for rights, I was no less keen and insistent upon self-purification.

There was one thing, however, which still remained to be done, namely, the awakening in the Indian settler of a sense of duty to the motherland. India was poor, the Indian settler went to South Africa in search of wealth, and he was bound to contribute part of his earnings for the benefit of his countrymen in the hour of their adversity. This the settler did during the terrible famines of 1897 and 1899. They contributed handsomely for famine relief, and more so in 1899 than in 1897. We had appealed to Englishmen also for funds, and they had responded well. Even the indentured Indians gave their share to the contribution, and the

system inaugurated at the time of these famines has been continued ever since, and we know that Indians in South Africa never fail to send handsome contributions to India in times of national calamity.

Thus service of the Indians in South Africa ever revealed to me new implications of truth at every stage. Truth is like a vast tree, which yields more and more fruit, the more you nurture it. The deeper the search in the mine of truth, the richer the discovery of the gems buried there, in the shape of openings for an ever greater variety of service.

12. RETURN TO INDIA

On my relief from war-duty, I felt that my work was no longer in South Africa but in India. Not that there was nothing to be done in South Africa, but I was afraid that my main business might become merely money-making.

Friends at home were also pressing me to return, and I felt that I should be of more service in India. And for the work in South Africa, there were of course Messrs Khan and Mansukhlal Naazar. So I requested my co-workers to relieve me. After very great difficulty my request was conditionally accepted, the condition being that I should be ready to go back to South Africa, if within a year the community should need me. I thought it was a difficult condition, but the love that bound me to the community made me accept it.

‘The Lord has bound me
With the cotton-thread of love,
I am His bondslave,’

sang Mirabai. And for me, too, the cotton-thread of love that bound me to the community was too strong to break. The voice of the people is the voice of God, and here the voice of friends was too real to be rejected. I accepted the condition and got their permission to go.

At this time I was intimately connected only with Natal. The Natal Indians bathed me with the nectar of love. Farewell meetings were arranged at every place, and costly gifts were presented to me.

Gifts had been bestowed on me before when I returned to India in 1899, but this time the farewell was overwhelming. The gifts of course included things in gold and silver, but there were articles of costly diamond as well.

What right had I to accept all these gifts? Accepting them, how could I persuade myself that I was serving the community without remuneration? All the gifts, excepting a few from my clients, were purely for my service

to the community, and I could make no difference between my clients and co-workers; for the clients also helped me in my public work.

One of the gifts was gold necklace worth fifty guineas, meant for my wife. But even that gift was given because of my public work, and so it could not be separated from the rest.

The evening I was presented with the bulk of these things, I had a sleepless night. I walked up and down my room deeply agitated, but could find no solution. It was difficult for me to forego gifts worth hundreds, it was more difficult to keep them.

And even if I could keep them, what about my children? What about my wife? They were being trained to a life of service, and to an understanding that service was its own reward.

I had no costly ornaments in the house. We had been fast simplifying our life. How then could we afford to have gold watches? How could we afford to wear gold chains and diamond rings? Even then I was exhorting people to conquer the infatuation for jewellery. What was I now to do with the jewellery that had come upon me?

I decided that I could not keep these things. I drafted a letter, creating a trust of them in favour of the community and appointing Parsi Rustomji and others trustees. In the morning I held a consultation with my wife and children and finally got rid of the heavy incubus.

I knew that I should have some difficulty in persuading my wife, and I was sure that I should have none so far as the children were concerned. So I decided to constitute them my attorneys.

The children readily agreed to my proposal. 'We do not need these costly presents, we must return them to the community, and should we ever need them, we could easily purchase them,' they said.

I was delighted. 'Then you will plead with mother, won't you?' I asked them.

'Certainly,' said they. 'That is our business. She does not need to wear the ornaments. She would want to keep them for us, and if we don't want them, why should she not agree to part with them?'

But it was easier said than done.

'You may not need them,' said my wife. 'Your children may not need them. Cajoled, they will dance to your tune. I can understand your not permitting me to wear them. But what about my daughters-in-law? They will be sure to need them. And who knows what will happen tomorrow? I would be the last person to part with gifts so lovingly given.'

And thus the torrent of argument went on, reinforced, in the end, by tears. But the children were adamant. And I was unmoved.

I mildly put in: 'The children have yet to get married. We do not want to see them married young. When they are growing up, they can take care of themselves. And surely we shall not have, for our sons, brides who are fond of ornaments. And if after all we need to provide them with ornaments, I am there. You will ask me then.'

'Ask you? I know you by this time. You deprived me of my ornaments, you would not leave me in peace with them. Fancy you offering to get ornaments for the daughters-in-law! You who are trying to make *sadhus* of my boys from today! No, the ornaments will not be returned. And pray what right have you to my necklace?'

'But,' I rejoined, 'is the necklace given you for your service or for my service?'

'I agree. But service rendered by you is as good as rendered by me. I have toiled and moiled for you day and night. Is that no service? You forced all and sundry on me, making me weep bitter tears, and I slaved for them!'

These were pointed thrusts, and some of them went home. But I was determined to return the ornaments. I somehow succeeded in extorting a consent from her. The gifts received in 1896 and 1901 were all returned. A trust-deed was prepared, and they were deposited with a bank, to be used for the service of the community, according to my wishes or to those of the trustees.

Often, when I was in need of funds for public purposes, and felt that I must draw upon the trust, I have been able to raise the requisite amount, leaving the trust money intact. The fund is still there, being operated upon in times of need, and it has regularly accumulated.

I have never since regretted the step, and as the years have gone by, my wife has also seen its wisdom. It has saved us from many temptations.

I am definitely of opinion that a public worker should accept no costly gifts.

13. IN INDIA AGAIN

So I sailed for home. Mauritius was one of the ports of call, and as the boat made a long halt there, I went ashore and acquainted myself fairly well with the local conditions. For one night I was the guest of Sir Charles Bruce, the Governor of the Colony.

After reaching India I spent some time in going about the country. It was the year 1901, when the Congress met at Calcutta under the

presidentship of Mr. Dinshaw Wacha. And I of course attended it. It was my first experience of the Congress.

From Bombay I travelled in the same train as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, as I had to speak to him about conditions in South Africa. I knew the kingly style in which he lived. He had engaged a special saloon for himself, and I had orders to take my opportunity of speaking to him by travelling in his saloon for one stage. I, therefore, went to the saloon and reported myself at the appointed station. With him were Mr. Wacha, and Mr. Chimanlal Setalvad. They were discussing politics. As soon as Sir Pherozeshah saw me, he said, 'Gandhi, it seems nothing can be done for you. Of course we will pass the resolution you want. But what rights have we in our own country? I believe that so long as we have no power in our own land, you cannot fare better in the colonies.'

I was taken aback. Mr. Setalvad seemed to concur in the view; Mr. Wacha cast a pathetic look at me.

I tried to plead with Sir Pherozeshah, but it was out of the question for one like me to prevail upon the uncrowned king of Bombay. I contented myself with the fact that I should be allowed to move my resolution.

'You will of course show me the resolution,' said Mr. Wacha, to cheer me up. I thanked him, and left them at the next stop.

So we reached Calcutta. The President was taken to his camp with great *eclat* by the Reception Committee. I asked a volunteer where I was to go. He took me to the Ripon College, where a number of delegates were being put up. Fortune favoured me. Lokamanya was put up in the same block as I. I have a recollection that he came a day later.

And as was natural, Lokamanya would never be without his darbar. Were I a painter, I could paint him as I saw him seated on his bed—so vivid is the whole scene in my memory. Of the numberless people that called on him, I can recollect today only one, namely, the late Babu Motilal Ghose, editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. Their loud laughter and their talks about the wrong-doings of the ruling race cannot be forgotten.

But I propose to examine in some detail the appointments in this camp. The volunteers were clashing against one another. You asked one of them to do something. He delegated it to another, and he in his turn to a third, and so on; and as for the delegates, they were neither here nor there.

I made friends with a few volunteers. I told them some things about South Africa, and they felt somewhat ashamed. I tried to bring home to them the secret of service. They seemed to understand, but service is no mushroom growth. It presupposes the will first, and then experience. There

was no lack of will on the part of those good simple-hearted young men, but their experience was nil. The Congress would meet three days every year, and then go to sleep. What training could one have out of a three days' show once a year? And the delegates were of a piece with the volunteers. They had no better or longer training. They would do nothing themselves. 'Volunteer, do this,' 'Volunteer, do that,' were their constant orders.

Even here I was face to face with untouchability in a fair measure. The Tamilian kitchen was far away from the rest. To the Tamil delegates even the sight of others, whilst they were dining, meant pollution. So a special kitchen had to be made for them in the college compound, walled in by wicker-work. It was full of smoke which choked you. It was a kitchen, dining-room, washroom, all in one—a close safe with no outlet. To me this looked like a travesty of *Varnadharma*¹. If, I said to myself, there was such untouchability between the delegates of the Congress, one could well imagine the extent to which it existed amongst their constituents. I heaved a sigh at the thought.

There was no limit to insanitation. Pools of water were everywhere. There were only a few latrines, and the recollection of their stink still oppresses me. I pointed it out to the volunteers. They said point-blank: 'That is not our work, it is the scavenger's work.' I asked for a broom. The man stared at me in wonder. I procured one and cleaned the latrine. But that was for myself. The rush was so great, and the latrines were so few, that they needed frequent cleaning; but that was more than I could do. So I had to content myself with simply ministering to myself. And the others did not seem to mind the stench and the dirt.

But that was not all. Some of the delegates did not scruple to use the verandahs outside their rooms for calls of nature at night. In the morning I pointed out the spots to the volunteers. No one was ready to undertake the cleaning, and I found no one to share the honour with me of doing it. Conditions have since considerably improved, but even today thoughtless delegates are not wanting who disfigure the Congress camp by committing nuisances wherever they choose, and all the volunteers are not always ready to clean up after them.

I saw that if the Congress session were to be prolonged, conditions would be quite favourable for the outbreak of an epidemic.

1. Duties of the four fundamental divisions of Hindu society

14. CLERK AND BEARER

There were yet two days for the Congress session to begin. I had made up my mind to offer my services to the Congress office, in order to gain some experience. So as soon as I had finished the daily ablutions on arrival at Calcutta, I proceeded to the Congress office.

Babu Bhupendranath Basu and Sjt. Ghosal were the secretaries. I went to Bhupenbabu and offered my services. He looked at me, and said: 'I have no work, but possibly Ghosalbabu might have something to give you. Please go to him.'

So I went to him. He scanned me and said with a smile: 'I can give you only clerical work. Will you do it?'

'Certainly,' said I. 'I am here to do anything that is not beyond my capacity.'

'That is the right spirit, young man,' he said. Addressing the volunteers who surrounded him, he added, 'Do you hear what this young man says?'

Then turning to me he proceeded: 'Well then, here is a heap of letters for disposal. Take that chair and begin. As you see, hundreds of people come to see me. What am I to do? Am I to meet them, or am I to answer these busybodies inundating me with letters? I have no clerks to whom I can entrust this work. Most of these letters have nothing in them, but will you please look them through. Acknowledge those that are worth it, and refer to me those that need a considered reply.'

I was delighted at the confidence reposed in me.

Sjt. Ghosal did not know me when he gave me the work. Only later did he enquire about my credentials.

I found my work very easy—the disposal of that heap of correspondence. I had done with it in no time, and Sjt. Ghosal was very glad. He was talkative. He would talk away for hours together. When he learnt something from me about my history, he felt rather sorry to have given me clerical work. But I reassured him: 'Please don't worry. What am I before you? You have grown grey in the service of the Congress, and are as an elder to me. I am but an inexperienced youth. You have put me under a debt of obligation by entrusting me with this work. For I want to do Congress work, and you have given me the rare opportunity of understanding the details.'

'To tell you the truth,' said Sjt. Ghosal. 'that is the proper spirit. But young men of today do not realize it. Of course I have known the Congress since its birth. In fact I may claim a certain share with Mr. Hume in bringing the Congress into being.'

And thus we became good friends. He insisted on my having lunch with him.

Sjt. Ghosal used to get his shirt buttoned by his bearer. I volunteered to do the bearer's duty, and I loved to do it, as my regard for elders was always great. When he came to know this, he did not mind my doing little acts of personal service for him. In fact he was delighted. Asking me to button his shirt, he would say, 'You see, now, the Congress secretary has no time even to button his shirt. He has always some work to do.' Sjt. Ghosal's naivete amused me, but did not create any dislike in me for service of that nature. The benefit I received from this service is incalculable.

In a few days I came to know the working of the Congress. I met most of the leaders, I observed the movements of stalwarts like Ghokhale and Surendranath. I also noticed the huge waste of time there. I observed too, with sorrow even then, the prominent place that the English language occupied in our affairs. There was little regard for economy of energy. More than one did the work of one, and many an important thing was no one's business at all.

Critical as my mind was in observing these things, there was enough charity in me, and so I always thought that it might after all be impossible to do better in the circumstances, and that saved me from undervaluing any work.

15. IN THE CONGRESS

In the Congress at last. The immense pavilion and the volunteers in stately array, as also the elders seated on the dais, overwhelmed me. I wondered where I should be in that vast assemblage.

The presidential address was a book by itself. To read it from cover to cover was out of the question. Only a few passages were therefore read.

After this came the election of the Subjects Committee. Gokhale took me to the Committee meetings.

Sir Pherozeshah had of course agreed to admit my resolution, but I was wondering who would put it before the Subjects Committee, and when. For there were lengthy speeches to every resolution, all in English to boot, and every resolution had some well-known leader to back it. Mine was but a feeble pipe amongst those veteran drums, and as the night was closing in, my heart beat fast. The resolutions coming at the fag-end were, so far as I can recollect, rushed through at lightning speed.

Everyone was hurrying to go. It was eleven o'clock. I had not the courage to speak. I had already met Gokhale, who had looked at my resolution. So I drew near his chair and whispered to him: 'Please do something for me.' He said: 'Your resolution is not out of my mind. You see the way they are rushing through the resolutions. But I will not allow yours to be passed over.'

'So we have done?' said Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.

'No, no there is still the resolution on South Africa. Mr. Gandhi has been waiting long,' cried out Gokhale.

'Have you seen the resolution?' asked Sir Pherozeshah.

'Of course.'

'Do you like it?'

'It is quite good.'

'Well then, let us have it, Gandhi.'

I read it trembling.

Gokhale supported it.

'Unanimously passed,' cried out everyone.

'You will have five minutes to speak on it, Gandhi,' said Mr. Wacha.

The procedure was far from pleasing to me. No one had troubled to understand the resolution, everyone was in a hurry to go, and because Gokhale had seen the resolution, it was not thought necessary for the rest to see it or understand it!

The morning found me worrying about my speech. What was I to say in five minutes? I had prepared myself fairly well, but the words would not come. I had decided not to read my speech, but to speak *ex tempore*. But the faculty for speaking that I had acquired in South Africa seemed to have left me for the moment.

As soon as it was time for my resolution, Mr. Wacha called out my name. I stood up. My head was reeling. I read the resolution somehow. Someone had printed and distributed amongst the delegates copies of a poem he had written in praise of foreign emigration. I read the poem and referred to the grievances of the settlers in South Africa. Just at this moment Mr. Wacha rang the bell. I was sure I had not yet spoken for five minutes. I did not know that the bell was rung in order to warn me to finish in two minutes more. I had heard others speak for half an hour or three-quarters of an hour, and yet no bell was rung for them. I felt hurt and sat down as soon as the bell was rung. But my childlike intellect thought then that the poem contained an answer to Sir Pherozeshah.¹ There was no question

1. See *Chapter 13*, Paragraph Third.

about the passing of the resolution. In those days there was hardly any difference between visitors and delegates. Everyone raised his hand and all resolutions passed unanimously. My resolution also fared in this wise, and so lost all its importance for me. And yet the very fact that it was passed by the Congress was enough to delight my heart. The knowledge that the *imprimatur* of the Congress meant that of the whole country was enough to delight anyone.

16. LORD CURZON'S DARBAR

The Congress was over, but as I had to meet the Chamber of Commerce and various people in connection with work in South Africa, I stayed in Calcutta for a month. Rather than stay this time in a hotel, I arranged to get the required introduction for a room in the India Club. Among its members were some prominent Indians, and I looked forward to getting into touch with them and interesting them in the work in South Africa. Gokhale frequently went to this club to play billiards, and when he knew that I was to stay in Calcutta for some time, he invited me to stay with him. I thankfully accepted the invitation, but did not think it proper to go there by myself. He waited for a day or two and then took me personally. He discovered my reserve and said: 'Gandhi, you have to stay in the country, and this sort of reserve will not do. You must get into touch with as many people as possible. I want you to do Congress work.'

I shall record here an incident in the India Club, before I proceed to talk of my stay with Gokhale.

Lord Curzon held his darbar about this time. Some Rajas and Maharajas who had been invited to the darbar were members of the club. In the club I always found them wearing fine Bengali *dhotis* and shirts and scarves. On the darbar day they put on trousers befitting *khansamas*¹ and shining boots. I was pained and inquired of one of them the reason for the change.

'We alone know our unfortunate condition. We alone know the insults we have to put up with, in order that we may possess our wealth and titles,' he replied.

'But what about these *khansama* turbans and these shining boots?' I asked.

'Do you see any difference between *khansamas* and us?' he replied, and added, 'they are our *khansamas*, we are Lord Curzon's *khansamas*.'

1. Waiters.

If I were to be absent from the levee, I should have to suffer the consequences. If I were to attend it in my usual dress, it would be an offense. And do you think I am going to get any opportunity there of talking to Lord Curzon? Not a bit of it!

I was moved to pity for this plain-spoken friend.

This reminds me of another *darbar*.

At the time when Lord Hardinge laid the foundation-stone of the Hindu University, there was a *darbar*. There were Rajas and Maharajas of course, but Pandit Malaviyaji specially invited me also to attend it, and I did so.

I was distressed to see the Maharajas bedecked like women—silk *pyjamas* and silk *achkans*, pearl necklaces round their necks, bracelets on their wrists, pearl and diamond tassels on their turbans, and besides all this, swords with golden hilts hanging from their waist-bands.

I discovered that these were insignia not of their royalty, but of their slavery. I had thought that they must be wearing these badges of impotence of their own free will, but I was told that it was obligatory for these Rajas to wear all their costly jewels at such functions. I also gathered that some of them had a positive dislike for wearing these jewels, and that they never wore them except on occasions like the *darbar*.

I do not know how far my information was correct. But whether they wear them on other occasions or not, it is distressing enough to have to attend viceregal *darbars* in jewels that only some women wear.

How heavy is the toll of sins and wrongs that wealth, power and prestige exact from man!

17. A MONTH WITH GOKHALE—I

From the very first day of my stay with him, Gokhale made me feel completely at home. He treated me as though I were his younger brother; he acquainted himself with all my requirements, and arranged to see that I got all I needed. Fortunately my wants were few, and as I had cultivated the habit of self-help, I needed very little personal attendance. He was deeply impressed with my habit of fending for myself, my personal cleanliness, perseverance, and regularity, and would often overwhelm me with praise.

He seemed to keep nothing private from me. He would introduce me to all the important people that called on him. Of these the one who stands foremost in my memory is Dr. (now Sir) P. C. Ray. He lived practically next door and was a very frequent visitor.

This is how he introduced Dr. Ray: 'This is Professor Ray, who having a monthly salary of Rs. 800, keeps just Rs. 40 for himself and devotes the balance to public purposes. He is not, and does not want to get, married.'

I see little difference between Dr. Ray as he is today, and as he used to be then. His dress used to be nearly as simple as it is, with this difference of course, that whereas it is Khadi now, it used to be Indian mill-cloth in those days. I felt I could never hear too much of the talks between Gokhale and Dr. Ray, as they all pertained to public good or were of educative value. At times they were painful too, containing, as they did, strictures on public men. As a result, some of those whom I had regarded as stalwart fighters began to look quite puny.

To see Gokhale at work was as much a joy as an education. He never wasted a minute. His private relations and friendships were all for public good. All his talks had reference only to the good of the country and were absolutely free from any trace of untruth or insincerity. India's poverty and subjection were matters of constant and intense concern to him. Various people sought to interest him in different things. But he gave every one of them the same reply: 'You do the thing yourself. Let me do my own work. What I want is freedom for my country. After that is won, we can think of other things. Today that one thing is enough to engage all my time and energy.'

His reverence for Ranade could be seen every moment. Ranade's authority was final in every matter, and he would cite it at every step. The anniversary of Ranade's death (or birth, I forget which) occurred during my stay with Gokhale, who observed it regularly. There were with him then, besides myself, his friends Professor Kathavate and a Sub-Judge. He invited us to take part in the celebration, and in his speech he gave us his reminiscences of Ranade. He compared incidentally Ranade, Telang, and Mandlik. He eulogized Telang's charming style and Mandlik's greatness as a reformer. Citing an instance of Mandlik's solicitude for his clients, he told us an anecdote as to how once, having missed his usual train, he engaged a special train so as to be able to attend the court in the interest of his client. But Ranade, he said, towered above them all, as a versatile genius. He was not only a great judge, he was an equally great historian, economist, and reformer. Although he was a judge, he fearlessly attended the Congress, and everyone had such confidence in his sagacity that they unquestioningly accepted his decisions. Gokhale's joy knew no bounds, as he described these qualities of head and heart which were all combined in his master.

Gokhale used to have a horse-carriage in those days. I did not know the circumstances that had made a horse-carriage a necessity for him, and I remonstrated with him: 'Can't you make use of the tramcar in going about from place to place? Is it derogatory to a leader's dignity?'

Slightly pained, he said, 'So you also have failed to understand me! I do not use my Council allowances for my own personal comforts. I envy your liberty to go about in tramcars, but I am sorry I cannot do likewise. When you are the victim of as wide a publicity as I am, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for you to go about in a tramcar. There is no reason to suppose that everything that the leaders do is with a view to personal comfort. I love your simple habits. I live as simply as I can, but some expense is almost inevitable for a man like myself.'

He thus satisfactorily disposed of one of my complaints, but there was another which he could not dispose of to my satisfaction.

'But you do not even go out for walks,' said I. 'Is it surprising that you should be always ailing? Should public work leave no time for physical exercise?'

'When do you ever find me free to go out for a walk?' he replied.

I had such a great regard for Gokhale that I never strove with him. Though this reply was far from satisfying me, I remained silent. I believed then, and I believe even now, that no matter what amount of work one has, one should always find some time for exercise, just as one does for one's meals. It is my humble opinion that, far from taking away from one's capacity for work, it adds to it.

18. A MONTH WITH GOKHALE—II

Whilst living under Gokhale's roof I was far from being a stay-at-home.

I had told my Christian friends in South Africa that in India I would meet the Christian Indians and acquaint myself with their condition. I had heard of Babu Kalicharan Banerji, and held him in high regard. He took a prominent part in the Congress, and I had none of the misgivings about him that I had about the average Christian Indian, who stood aloof from the Congress and isolated himself from Hindus and Musalmans. I told Gokhale that I was thinking of meeting him. He said: 'What is the good of your seeing him? He is a very good man, but I am afraid he will not satisfy you. I know him very well. However, you can certainly meet him if you like.'

I sought an appointment, which he readily gave me. When I went, I found that his wife was on her death-bed. His house was simple. In the Congress I had seen him in a coat and trousers, but I was glad to find him now wearing a Bengali *dhoti* and shirt. I liked his simple mode of dress, though I myself then wore a Parsi coat and trousers. Without much ado I presented my difficulties to him. He asked: 'Do you believe in the doctrine of original sin?'

'I do,' said I.

'Well then, Hinduism offers no absolution therefrom, Christianity does,' and added: 'The wages of sin is death, and the Bible says that the only way of deliverance is surrender unto Jesus.'

I put forward *Bhakti-marga* (the path of devotion) of the *Bhagavadgita*, but to no avail. I thanked him for his goodness. He failed to satisfy me, but I benefited by the interview.

During these days I walked up and down the streets of Calcutta. I went to most places on foot. I met Justice Mitter and Sir Gurudas Banerji, whose help I wanted in my work in South Africa. And about this time I met Raja Sir Pyarimohan Mukarji.

Kalicharan Banerji had spoken to me about the Kali temple, which I was eager to see, especially as I had read about it in books. So I went there one day. Justice Mitter's house was in the same locality, and I therefore went to the temple on the same day that I visited him. On the way I saw a stream of sheep going to be sacrificed to Kali. Rows of beggars lined the lane leading to the temple. There were religious mendicants too, and even in those days I was sternly opposed to giving alms to sturdy beggars. A crowd of them pursued me. One of such men was found seated on a verandah. He stopped me, and accosted me: 'Whither are you going, my boy?' I replied to him.

He asked my companion and me to sit down, which we did.

I asked him: 'Do you regard this sacrifice as religion?'

'Who would regard killing of animals as religion?'

'Then, why don't you preach against it?'

'That's not my business. Our business is to worship God.'

'But could you not find any other place in which to worship God?'

'All places are equally good for us. The people are like a flock of sheep, following where leaders lead them. It is no business of us *sadhus*.'

We did not prolong the discussion, but passed on to the temple. We were greeted by rivers of blood. I could not bear to stand there. I was exasperated and restless. I have never forgotten that sight.

That very evening I had an invitation to dinner at a party of Bengali friends. There I spoke to a friend about this cruel form of worship. He said: 'The sheep don't feel anything. The noise and the drum-beating there deaden all sensation of pain.'

I could not swallow this. I told him that if the sheep had speech, they would tell a different tale. I felt that the cruel custom ought to be stopped. I thought of the story of Buddha, but I also saw that the task was beyond my capacity.

I hold today the same opinion as I held then. To my mind the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be unwilling to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body. I hold that the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by man from the cruelty of man. But he who has not qualified himself for such service is unable to afford to it any protection. I must go through more self-purification and sacrifice, before I can hope to save these lambs from this unholy sacrifice. It is my constant prayer that there may be born on earth some great spirit, man or woman, fired with divine pity, who will deliver us from this heinous sin, save the lives of the innocent creatures, and purify the temple. How is it that Bengal, with all its knowledge, intelligence, sacrifice, and emotion, tolerates this slaughter?

19. A MONTH WITH GOKHALE—III

The terrible sacrifice offered to Kali in the name of religion enhanced my desire to know Bengali life. I had read and heard a good deal about the Brahmo Samaj. I knew something about the life of Pratap Chandra Mazumdar. I had attended some of the meetings addressed by him. I secured his life of Keshav Chandra Sen, read it with great interest, and understood the distinction between Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and Adi Brahmo Samaj. I met Pandit Shivanath Shastri, and in company with Professor Kathavate went to see Maharshi Devendranath Tagore; but as no interviews with him were allowed then, we could not see him. We were, however, invited to a celebration of the Brahmo Samaj held at his place, and there we had the privilege of listening to fine Bengali music. Ever since I have been a lover of Bengali music.

Having seen enough of the Brahmo Samaj, it was impossible to be satisfied without seeing Swami Vivekanand. So with great enthusiasm I went to Belur Math, mostly, or maybe all the way, on foot. I loved the sequestered site of the Math. I was disappointed and sorry to be told that the Swami was at his Calcutta house, lying ill, and could not be seen.

I then ascertained the place of residence of Sister Nivedita, and met her in a Chowringhee mansion. I was taken aback by the splendour that surrounded her, and even in our conversation there was not much meeting ground. I spoke to Gokhale about this, and he said he did not wonder that there could be no point of contact between me and a volatile¹ person like her.

I met her again at Mr. Pestonji Padshah's place. I happened to come in just as she was talking to his old mother, and so I became an interpreter between the two. In spite of my failure to find any agreement with her, I could not but notice and admire her overflowing love for Hinduism. I came to know of her books later.

I used to divide my day between seeing the leading people in Calcutta regarding the work in South Africa, and visiting and studying the religious and public institutions of the city. I once addressed a meeting, presided over by Dr. Mullick, on the work of the Indian Ambulance Corps in the Boer War. My acquaintance with *The Englishman* stood me in good stead on this occasion too. Mr. Saunders was ill then, but rendered me as much help as in 1896. Gokhale liked this speech of mine, and he was very glad to hear Dr. Ray praising it.

Thus my stay under the roof of Gokhale made my work in Calcutta very easy, brought me into touch with the foremost Bengali families, and was the beginning of my intimate contact with Bengal.

I must need skip over many a reminiscence of this memorable month. Let me simply mention my flying visit to Burma, and the *foongis*² there. I was pained by their lethargy. I saw the golden pagoda. I did not like the innumerable little candles burning in the temple, and the rats running about the sanctum brought to my mind thoughts of Swami Daynand's experience at Morvi. The freedom and energy of the Burmese women charmed just as the indolence of the men pained me. I also saw, during my brief sojourn, that just as Bombay was not India, Rangoon was not Burma, and that just as we in India have become commission agents of English merchants, even so in Burma have we combined with the English merchants, in making the Burmese people our commission agents.

On my return from Burma, I took leave of Gokhale. The separation was a wrench, but my work in Bengal, or rather Calcutta, was finished, and I had no occasion to stay any longer.

1. Regarding the use of the word 'volatile', see note 'In Justice of Her Memory', *Young India*, 30th June, 1927.

2. Monks.

Before settling down I had thought of making a tour through India travelling third class, and acquainting myself with the hardships of third class passengers. I spoke to Gokhale about this. To begin with he ridiculed the idea, but when I explained to him what I hoped to see, he cheerfully approved. I planned to go first to Benares to pay my respects to Mrs. Besant, who was then ill.

It was necessary to equip myself anew for the third class tour. Gokhale himself gave me a metal tiffin-box, and got it filled with sweet-balls and *puris*. I purchased a canvas bag worth twelve annas and a long coat made of Chhaya¹ wool. The bag was to contain this coat, a *dhoti*, a towel, and a shirt. I had a blanket as well, to cover myself with, and a water-jug. Thus equipped, I set forth on my travels. Gokhale and Dr. Ray came to the station to see me off. I had asked them both not to trouble to come, but they insisted. 'I should not have come if you had gone first class, but now I had to,' said Gokhale.

No one stopped Gokhale from going on to the platform. He was in his silk turban, jacket and *dhoti*. Dr. Ray was in his Bengali dress. He was stopped by the ticket collector, but on Gokhale telling him that he was his friend, he was admitted.

Thus with their good wishes I started on my journey.

20. IN BENARES

The journey was from Calcutta to Rajkot, and I planned to halt at Benares, Agra, Jaipur, and Palanpur *en route*. I had not the time to see any more places than these. In each city I stayed one day, and put up in *dharmashalas* or with *pandas*² like the ordinary pilgrims, excepting at Palanpur. So far as I can remember, I did not spend more than Rs. 31 (including the train fare) on this journey.

In travelling third class I mostly preferred the ordinary to the mail trains, as I knew that the latter were more crowded and the fares in them higher.

Third class compartments are practically as dirty, and the closet arrangements as bad, today as they were then. There may be a little improvement now, but the difference between the facilities provided for the first and the third classes is out of all proportion to the difference between the fares for the two classes. Third class passengers are treated like sheep, and their comforts are sheeps' comforts. In Europe I travelled

1. A place in Porbandar State noted locally for its coarse woollen fabrics.

2. Priests

third—and only once first, just to see what it was like—but there I noticed no such difference between the first and the third classes. In South Africa third class passengers are mostly Negroes, yet the third class comforts are better there than here. In parts of South Africa third class compartments are provided with sleeping accommodation and cushioned seats. The accommodation is also regulated, so as to prevent overcrowding, whereas here I have found the regulation limit usually exceeded.

The indifference of the railway authorities to the comforts of the third class passengers, combined with the dirty and inconsiderate habits of the passengers themselves, makes third class travelling a trial for a passenger of cleanly ways. These unpleasant habits commonly include throwing of rubbish on the floor of the compartment, smoking at all hours and in all places, betel and tobacco chewing, converting of the whole carriage into a spittoon, shouting and yelling, and using foul language, regardless of the convenience or comfort of fellow passengers. I have noticed little difference between my experience of the third class travelling in 1902 and that of my unbroken third class tours from 1915 to 1919.

I can think of only one remedy for this awful state of things—that educated men should make a point of travelling third class and reforming the habits of the people, as also of never letting the railway authorities rest in peace, sending in complaints wherever necessary, never resorting to bribes or any unlawful means for obtaining their own comforts, and never putting up with infringements of rules on the part of anyone concerned. This, I am sure, would bring about considerable improvement.

My serious illness in 1918-19 has unfortunately compelled me practically to give up third class travelling, and it has been a matter of constant pain and shame to me, especially because the disability came at a time when the agitation for the removal of the hardships of third class passengers was making fair headway. The hardships of poor railway and steamship passengers, accentuated by their bad habits, the undue facilities allowed by Government to foreign trade, and such other things, make an important group of subjects, worthy to be taken up by one or two enterprising workers who could devote their full time to it.

But I shall leave the third class passengers at that, and come to my experiences in Benares. I arrived there in the morning. I had decided to put up with *apanda*. Numerous Brahmans surrounded me as soon as I got out of the train, and I selected one who struck me to be comparatively cleaner and better than the rest. It proved to be a good choice. There was a cow in the courtyard of his house, and an upper storey where I was given a lodging. I did not want to have any food without ablution in the

Ganges in the proper orthodox manner. The *panda* made preparations for it. I had told him beforehand that on no account could I give him more than a rupee and four annas as *dakshina*,¹ and that he should therefore keep this in mind while making the preparations.

The *panda* readily assented. 'Be the pilgrim rich or poor,' said he, 'the service is the same in every case. But the amount of *dakshina* we receive depends upon the will and the ability of the pilgrim.' I did not find that the *panda* at all abridged the usual formalities in my case. The *puja*² was over at twelve o'clock, and I went to the Kashi Vishvanath temple for *darshan*. I was deeply pained by what I saw there. When practising as a barrister in Bombay in 1891, I had occasion to attend a lecture on 'Pilgrimage to Kashi' in the Prarthana Samaj hall. I was therefore prepared for some measure of disappointment. But the actual disappointment was greater than I had bargained for.

The approach was through a narrow and slippery lane. Quiet there was none. The swarming flies and the noise made by the shopkeepers and pilgrims were perfectly insufferable.

Where one expected an atmosphere of meditation and communion, it was conspicuous by its absence. One had to seek that atmosphere in oneself. I did observe devout sisters, who were absorbed in meditation, entirely unconscious of the environment. But for this the authorities of the temple could scarcely claim any credit. The authorities should be responsible for creating and maintaining about the temple a pure, sweet, and serene atmosphere, physical as well as moral. Instead of this I found a bazar where cunning shopkeepers were selling sweets and toys of the latest fashion.

When I reached the temple, I was greeted at the entrance by a stinking mass of rotten flowers. The floor was paved with fine marble, which was however broken by some devotee innocent of aesthetic taste, who had set it with rupees serving as an excellent receptacle for dirt.

I went near the *Jnana-vapi* (Well of Knowledge). I searched here for God but failed to find Him. I was not therefore in a particularly good mood. The surroundings of the *Jnana-vapi* too I found to be dirty. I had no mind to give any *dakshina*. So I offered a pie. The *panda* in charge got angry and threw away the pie. He swore at me and said, 'This insult will take you straight to hell.'

This did not perturb me. 'Maharaj,' said I, 'whatever fate has in store for me, it does not behove one of your class to indulge in such language. You may take this pie if you like, or you will lose that too.'

1. Gift. 2. Worship.

‘Go away,’ he replied. ‘I don’t care for your pie.’ And then followed a further volley of abuse.

I took up the pie and went my way, flattering myself that the Brahman had lost a pie and I had saved one. But the Maharaj was hardly the man to let the pie go. He called me back and said, ‘All right, leave the pie here, I would rather not be as you are. If I refuse your pie, it will be bad for you.’

I silently gave him the pie and, with a sigh, went away.

Since then I have twice been to Kashi Vishvanath, but that has been after I had already been afflicted with the title of Mahatma, and experiences such as I have detailed above had become impossible. People eager to have my *darshan* would not permit me to have a *darshan* of the temple. The woes of Mahatmas are known to Mahatmas alone. Otherwise the dirt and the noise were the same as before.

If anyone doubts the infinite mercy of God, let him have a look at these sacred places. How much hypocrisy and irreligion does the Prince of Yogis suffer to be perpetrated in His holy name? He proclaimed long ago: ‘Whatever a man sows, that shall he reap.’ The law of Karma is inexorable and impossible of evasion. There is thus hardly any need for God to interfere. He laid down the law and, as it were, retired.

After this visit to the temple, I waited upon Mrs. Besant. I knew that she had just recovered from an illness. I sent in my name. She came at once. As I wished only to pay my respects to her, I said, ‘I am aware that you are in delicate health. I only wanted to pay my respects. I am thankful that you have been good enough to receive me in spite of your indifferent health. I will not detain you any longer.’

So saying, I took leave of her.

21. SETTLED IN BOMBAY?

Gokhale was very anxious that I should settle down in Bombay, practise at the bar, and help him in public work. Public work in those days meant Congress work, and the chief work of the institution which he had assisted to found was carrying on the Congress administration.

I liked Gokhale’s advice, but I was not overconfident of success as a barrister. The unpleasant memories of past failure were yet with me, and I still hated as poison the use of flattery for getting briefs.

I therefore decided to start work first at Rajkot. Kevalram Mavji Dave, my old well-wisher, who had induced me to go to England, was there, and he started me straightway with three briefs. Two of them were

appeals before the Judicial Assistant to the Political Agent in Kathiawad, and one was an original case in Jamnagar. This last was rather important. On my saying that I could not trust myself to do it justice, Kevalram Dave exclaimed: 'Winning or losing is no concern of yours. You will simply try your best, and I am of course there to assist you.'

The counsel on the other side was the late Sjt. Samarth. I was fairly well prepared. Not that I knew much of Indian law, but Kevalram Dave had instructed me very thoroughly. I had heard friends say, before I went out to South Africa, that Sir Pherozeshah Mehta had the law of evidence at his finger-tips, and that that was the secret of his success. I had borne this in mind, and during the voyage had carefully studied the Indian Evidence Act with commentaries thereon. There was of course also the advantage of my legal experience in South Africa.

I won the case and gained some confidence. I had no fear about the appeals, which were successful. All this inspired a hope in me that after all I might not fail even in Bombay.

But before I set forth the circumstances in which I decided to go to Bombay, I shall narrate my experience of the inconsiderateness and ignorance of English officials. The Judicial Assistant's court was peripatetic. He was constantly touring, and vakils and their clients had to follow him wherever he moved his camp. The vakils would charge more whenever they had to go out of headquarters, and so the clients had naturally to incur double the expenses. The inconvenience was no concern of the judge.

The appeal of which I am talking was to be heard at Veraval, where plague was raging. I have a recollection that there were as many as fifty cases daily in the place with a population of 5,500. It was practically deserted, and I put up in a deserted *dharmashala* at some distance from the town. But where were the clients to stay? If they were poor, they had simply to trust themselves to God's mercy.

A friend who also had cases before the court had wired that I should put in an application for the camp to be moved to some other station because of the plague at Veraval. On my submitting the application, the sahib asked me: 'Are you afraid?'

I answered: 'It is not a question of my being afraid. I think I can shift for myself, but what about the clients?'

'The plague has come to stay in India,' replied the sahib. 'Why fear it? The climate of Veraval is lovely. (The sahib lived far away from the town in a palatial tent pitched on the seashore.) Surely people must learn to live thus in the open.'

It was no use arguing against this philosophy. The sahib told his shirastedar: 'Make a note of what Mr. Gandhi says, and let me know if it is very inconvenient for the vakils or the clients.'

The sahib of course had honestly done what he thought was the right thing. But how could the man have an idea of the hardships of poor India? How was he to understand the needs, habits, idiosyncrasies, and customs of the people? How was one accustomed to measure things in gold sovereigns, all at once to make calculations in tiny bits of copper? As the elephant is powerless to think in the terms of the ant, in spite of the best intentions in the world, even so is the Englishman powerless to think in the terms of, or legislate for, the Indian.

But to resume the thread of the story. In spite of my successes, I had been thinking of staying on in Rajkot for some time longer, when one day Kevalram Dave came to me and said: 'Gandhi, we will not suffer you to vegetate here. You must settle in Bombay.'

'But who will find work for me there?' I asked. 'Will you find the expenses?'

'Yes, yes, I will,' said he. 'We shall bring you down here sometimes as a big barrister from Bombay, and drafting work we shall send you there. It lies with us vakils to make or mar a barrister. You have proved your worth in Jamnagar and Veraval, and I have therefore not the least anxiety about you. You are destined to do public work, and we will not allow you to be buried in Kathiawad. So tell me, then, when you will go to Bombay.'

'I am expecting a remittance from Natal. As soon as I get it I will go,' I replied.

The money came in about two weeks, and I went to Bombay. I took chambers in Payne, Gilbert and Sayani's offices, and it looked as though I had settled down.

22. FAITH ON ITS TRIAL

Though I had hired chambers in the Fort and a house in Girgaum. God would not let me settle down. Scarcely had I moved into my new house when my second son Manilal, who had already been through an acute attack of small-pox some years back, had a severe attack of typhoid, combined with pneumonia and signs of delirium at night.

The doctor was called in. He said medicine would have little effect, but eggs and chicken broth might be given with profit.

Manilal was only ten years old. To consult his wishes was out of the question. Being his guardian, I had to decide. The doctor was a very good Parsi. I told him that we were all vegetarians, and that I could not possibly give either of the two things to my son. Would he therefore recommend something else?

‘Your son’s life is in danger,’ said the good doctor. ‘We could give him milk diluted with water, but that will not give him enough nourishment. As you know, I am called in by many Hindu families, and they do not object to anything I prescribe. I think you will be well advised not to be so hard on your son.’

‘What you say is quite right,’ said I. ‘As a doctor you could not do otherwise. But my responsibility is very great. If the boy had been grown up, I should certainly have tried to ascertain his wishes and respected them. But here I have to think and decide for him. To my mind it is only on such occasions that a man’s faith is truly tested. Rightly or wrongly, it is part of my religious conviction that man may not eat meat, eggs, and the like. There should be a limit even to the means of keeping ourselves alive. Even for life itself we may not do certain things. Religion, as I understand it, does not permit me to use meat or eggs for me or mine even on occasions like this, and I must therefore take the risk that you say is likely. But I beg of you one thing. As I cannot avail myself of your treatment, I propose to try some hydropathic remedies which I happen to know. But I shall not know how to examine the boy’s pulse, chest, lungs, etc. If you will kindly look in from time to time to examine him and keep me informed of his condition, I shall be grateful to you.’

The good doctor appreciated my difficulty and agreed to my request. Though Manilal could not have made his choice, I told him what had passed between the doctor and myself and asked him his opinion.

‘Do try your hydropathic treatment,’ he said. ‘I will not have eggs or chicken broth.’

This made me glad, though I realized that if I had given him either of these, he would have taken it.

I knew Kuhne’s treatment, and had tried it too. I knew as well that fasting also could be tried with profit. So I began to give Manilal hip baths according to Kuhne, never keeping him in the tub for more than three minutes, and kept him on orange juice mixed with water for three days.

But the temperature persisted, going up to 104 degrees. At night he would be delirious. I began to get anxious. What would people say of me? What would my elder brother think of me? Could we not call in

another doctor? Why not have an Ayurvedic physician? What right had the parents to inflict their fads on their children?

I was haunted by thoughts like these. Then a contrary current would start. God would surely be pleased to see that I was giving the same treatment to my son as I would give myself. I had faith in hydropathy, and little faith in allopathy. The doctors could not guarantee recovery. At best they could experiment. The thread of life was in the hands of God. Why not trust it to Him, and in His name go on with what I thought was the right treatment?

My mind was torn between these conflicting thoughts. It was night. I was in Manilal's bed lying by his side. I decided to give him a wet sheet pack. I got up, wetted a sheet, wrung the water out of it, and wrapped it about Manilal, keeping only his head out, and then covered him with two blankets. To the head I applied a wet towel. The whole body was burning like hot iron, and quite parched. There was absolutely no perspiration.

I was sorely tired. I left Manilal in the charge of his mother, and went out for a walk on Chaupati to refresh myself. It was about ten o'clock. Very few pedestrians were out. Plunged in deep thought, I scarcely looked at them. 'My honour is in Thy keeping, oh Lord, in this hour of trial,' I repeated to myself. *Ramanama* was on my lips. After a short time I returned, my heart beating within my breast.

No sooner had I entered the room than Manilal said, 'You have returned, Bapu?'

'Yes, darling.'

'Do please pull me out. I am burning.'

'Are you perspiring, my boy?'

'I am simply soaked. Do please take me out.'

I felt his forehead. It was covered with beads of perspiration. The temperature was going down. I thanked God.

'Manilal, your fever is sure to go now. A little more perspiration, and then I will take you out.'

'Pray, no. Do deliver me from this furnace. Wrap me some other time if you like.'

I just managed to keep him under the pack for a few minutes more by diverting him. The perspiration streamed down his forehead. I undid the pack and dried his body. Father and son fell asleep in the same bed.

And each slept like a log. Next morning Manilal had much less fever. He went on thus for forty days on diluted milk and fruit juices. I had no fear now. It was an obstinate type of fever, but it had been got under control.

Today Manilal is the healthiest of my boys. Who can say whether his recovery was due to God's grace, or to hydropathy, or to careful dietary and nursing? Let everyone decide according to his own faith. For my part I was sure that God had saved my honour, and that belief remains unaltered to this day.

23. TO SOUTH AFRICA AGAIN

Manilal was restored to health, but I saw that the Girgaum house was not habitable. It was damp and ill-lighted. So in consultation with Shri Raveshankar Jagivan, I decided to hire some well-ventilated bungalow in a suburb of Bombay. I wandered about in Bandra and Santa Cruz. The slaughter house in Bandra prevented our choice falling there. Ghatkopar and places near it were too far from the sea. At last we hit upon a fine bungalow in Santa Cruz, which we hired as being the best from the point of view of sanitation.

I took a first class season ticket from Santa Cruz to Churchgate, and remember having frequently felt a certain pride in being the only first class passenger in my compartment. Often I walked to Bandra in order to take the fast train from there direct to Churchgate.

I prospered in my profession better than I had expected. My South African clients often entrusted me with some work, and it was enough to enable me to pay my way.

I had not yet succeeded in securing any work in the High Court, but I attended the 'moot' that used to be held in those days, though I never ventured to take part in it. I recall Jamiatram Nanabhai taking a prominent part. Like other fresh barristers I made a point of attending the hearing of cases in the High Court, more, I am afraid, for enjoying the soporific breeze coming straight from the sea than for adding to my knowledge. I observed that I was not the only one to enjoy this pleasure. It seemed to be the fashion and therefore nothing to be ashamed of.

However I began to make use of the High Court library and make fresh acquaintances, and felt that before long I should secure work in the High Court.

Thus whilst on the one hand I began to feel somewhat at ease about my profession, on the other hand Gokhale, whose eyes were always on me, had been busy making his own plans on my behalf. He peeped in at my chambers twice or thrice every week, often in company with friends whom he wanted me to know, and he kept me acquainted with his mode of work.

But it may be said that God has never allowed any of my own plans to stand. He has disposed them in His own way.

Just when I seemed to be settling down as I had intended, I received an unexpected cable from South Africa: 'Chamberlain expected here. Please return immediately.' I remembered my promise, and cabled to say that I should be ready to start the moment they put me in funds. They promptly responded, I gave up the chambers and started for South Africa.

I had an idea that the work there would keep me engaged for at least a year, so I kept the bungalow and left my wife and children there.

I believed then that enterprising youths who could not find an opening in the country should emigrate to other lands. I therefore took with me four or five such youths, one of whom was Maganlal Gandhi.

The Gandhis were and are a big family. I wanted to find out all those who wished to leave the trodden path and venture abroad. My father used to accommodate a number of them in some state service. I wanted them to be free from this spell. I neither could nor would secure other service for them; I wanted them to be self-reliant.

But as my ideals advanced, I tried to persuade these youths also to conform their ideals to mine, and I had the greatest success in guiding Maganlal Gandhi. But about this later.

The separation from wife and children, the breaking up of a settled establishment, and the going from the certain to the uncertain—all this was for a moment painful, but I had inured myself to an uncertain life. I think it is wrong to expect certainties in this world, where all else but God that is Truth is an uncertainty. All that appears and happens about and around us is uncertain, transient. But there is a Supreme Being hidden therein as a Certainty, and one would be blessed if one could catch a glimpse of that Certainty and hitch one's waggon to it. The quest for that Truth is the *summum bonum* of life.

I reached Durban not a day too soon. There was work waiting for me. The date for the deputation to wait on Mr. Chamberlain had been fixed. I had to draft the memorial to be submitted to him, and accompany the deputation.

PART FOUR

1. 'LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST'?

Mr. Chamberlain had come to get a gift of 35 million pounds from South Africa, and to win the hearts of Englishmen and Boers. So he gave a cold shoulder to the Indian deputation.

'You know,' he said 'that the Imperial Government has little control over self-governing Colonies. Your grievances seem to be genuine. I shall do what I can, if you wish to live in their midst.'

The reply cast a chill over the members of the deputation. I was also disappointed. It was an eye-opener for us all, and I saw that we should start with our work de novo. I explained the situation to my colleagues.

As a matter of fact there was nothing wrong about Mr. Chamberlain's reply. It was well that he did not mince matters. He had brought home to us in a rather gentle way the rule of might being right or the law of the sword.

But sword we had none. We scarcely had the nerve and the muscle even to receive sword-cuts.

Mr. Chamberlain had given only a short time to the sub-continent. If Shrinagar to Cape Comorin is 1,900 miles, Durban to Capetown is not less than 1,100 miles, and Mr. Chamberlain had to cover the long distance at hurricane speed.

From Natal he hastened to the Transvaal. I had to prepare the case for the Indians there as well and submit it to him. But how was I get to Pretoria? Our people there were not in a position to procure the necessary legal facilities for my getting to them in time. The War had reduced the Transvaal to a howling wilderness. There were neither provisions nor clothing available. Empty or closed shops were there, waiting to be replenished or opened, but that was a matter of time. Even refugees could not be allowed to return until the shops were ready with provisions. Every

Transvaller had therefore to obtain a permit. The European had no difficulty in getting one, but the Indian found it very hard.

During the War many officers and soldiers had come to South Africa from India and Ceylon, and it was considered to be the duty of the British authorities to provide for such of them as decided to settle there. They had in any event to appoint new officers, and these experienced men came in quite handy. The quick ingenuity of some of them created a new department. It showed their resourcefulness. There was a special department for the Negroes. Why then should there not be one for the Asiatics? The argument seemed to be quite plausible. When I reached the Transvaal, this new department had already been opened and was gradually spreading its tentacles. The officers who issued permits to the returning refugees might issue them to all, but how could they do so in respect of the Asiatics without the intervention of the new department? And if the permits were to be issued on the recommendation of the new department, some of the responsibility and burden of the permit officers could thus be lessened. This was how they had argued. The fact, however, was that the new department wanted some apology for work, and the men wanted money. If there had been no work, the department would have been unnecessary and would have been discontinued. So they found this work for themselves.

The Indians had to apply to this department. A reply would be vouchsafed many days after. And as there were large numbers wishing to return to the Transvaal, there grew up an army of intermediaries or touts, who with the officers, looted the poor Indians to the tune of thousands. I was told that no permit could be had without influence, pounds in spite of the influence which one might bring to bear. Thus there seemed to be no way open to me. I went to my old friend, the Police Superintendent of Durban, and said to him: 'Please introduce me to the Permit Officer and help me to obtain a permit. You know that I have been a resident of the Transvaal.' He immediately put on his hat, came out and secured me a permit. There was hardly an hour left before my train was to start. I had kept my luggage ready. I thanked Superintendent Alexander and started for Pretoria.

I now had a fair idea of the difficulties ahead. On reaching Pretoria I drafted the memorial. In Durban I do not recollect the Indians having been asked to submit in advance the names of their representatives, but here there was the new department and it asked to do so. The Pretoria Indians had already come to know that the officers wanted to exclude me.

But another chapter is necessary for this painful though amusing incident.

2. AUTOCRATS FROM ASIA

The officers at the head of the new department were at a loss to know how I had entered the Transvaal. They inquired of the Indians who used to go to them, but these could say nothing definite. The officers only ventured a guess that I might have succeeded in entering without a permit on the strength of my old connections. If that was the case, I was liable to be arrested!

It is a general practice, on the termination of a big war, to invest the Government of the day with special powers. This was the case in South Africa. The Government had passed a Peace Preservation Ordinance, which provided that anyone entering the Transvaal without a permit should be liable to arrest and imprisonment. The question of arresting me under this provision was mooted, but no one could summon up courage enough to ask me to produce my permit.

The officers had of course sent telegrams to Durban, and when they found that I had entered with a permit, they were disappointed. But they were not the men to be defeated by such disappointment. Though I had succeeded in entering the Transvaal, they could still successfully prevent me from waiting on Mr. Chamberlain.

So the community was asked to submit the names of the representatives who were to form the Deputation. Colour prejudice was of course in evidence everywhere in South Africa, but I was not prepared to find here the dirty and underhand dealing among officials that I was familiar with in India. In South Africa the public departments were maintained for the good of the people and were responsible to public opinion. Hence officials in charge had a certain courtesy of manner and humility about them, and coloured people also got the benefit of it more or less. With the coming of the officers from Asia, came also its autocracy, and the habits that the autocrats had imbibed there. In South Africa there was a kind of responsible government or democracy, whereas the commodity imported from Asia was autocracy pure and simple; for the Asiatics had no responsible government, there being a foreign power governing them. In South Africa the Europeans were settled emigrants. They had become South African citizens and had control over the departmental officers. But the autocrats from Asia now appeared on the scene, and the Indians in consequence found themselves between the devil and the deep sea.

I had a fair taste of this autocracy. I was first summoned to see the chief of the department, an officer from Ceylon. Lest I should appear to exaggerate when I say that I was 'summoned' to see the chief, I shall make myself clear. No written order was sent to me. Indian leaders often had to visit the Asiatic officers. Among these was the late Sheth Tyeb Haji Khanmahomed. The chief of the office asked him who I was and why I had come there.

'He is our adviser,' said Tyeb Sheth, 'and he has come here at our request.'

'Then what are we here for? Have we not been appointed to protect you? What can Gandhi know of the conditions here?' asked the autocrat.

Tyeb Sheth answered the charge as best he could: 'Of course you are there. But Gandhi is our man. He knows our language and understands us. You are after all officials.'

The Sahib ordered Tyeb Sheth to fetch me before him. I went to the Sahib in company with Tyeb Sheth and others. No seats were offered, we were all kept standing.

'What brings you here?' said the Sahib addressing me.

'I have come here at the request of my fellow countrymen to help them with my advice,' I replied.

'But don't you know that you have no right to come here? The permit you hold was given you by mistake. You must go back. You shall not wait on Mr. Chamberlain. It is for the protection of the Indians here that the Asiatic Department had been especially created. Well, you may go.' With this he bade me good-bye, giving me no opportunity for a reply.

But he detained my companions. He gave them a sound scolding and advised them to send me away.

They returned chagrined. We were now confronted with an unexpected situation.

3. POCKETED THE INSULT

I smarted under the insult, but as I had pocketed many such in the past I had become inured to them. I therefore decided to forget this latest one and take what course a dispassionate view of the case might suggest.

We had a letter from the Chief of the Asiatic Department to the effect that, as I had been found necessary to omit my name from the deputation which was to wait on him.

The letter was more than my co-workers could bear. They proposed to drop the idea of the deputation altogether. I pointed out to them the awkward situation of the community.

If you do not represent your case before Mr. Chamberlain,' said I, 'it will be presumed that you have no case at all. After all, the representation has to be made in writing, and we have got it ready. It does not matter in the least whether I read it or someone else reads it. Mr. Chamberlain is not going to argue the matter with us. I am afraid we must swallow the insult.'

I had scarcely finished speaking when Tyeb Sheth cried out, 'Does not an insult to you amount to an insult to the community? How can we forget that you are our representative?'

'Too true,' said I. 'But even the community will have to pocket insults like these. Have we any alternative?'

'Come what may, why should we swallow a fresh insult? Nothing worse can possibly happen to us. Have we many rights to lose?' asked Tyeb Sheth.

It was a spirited reply, but of what avail was it? I was fully conscious of the limitations of the community. I pacified my friends and advised them to have, in my place, Mr. George Godfrey, an Indian barrister.

So Mr. Godfrey led the deputation. Mr. Chamberlain referred in his reply to my exclusion. 'Rather than hear the same representative over and over again, is it not better to have someone new?' he said, and tried to heal the wound.

But all this, far from ending the matter, only added to the work of the community and also to mine. We had to start afresh.

'It is at your instance that the community helped in the war, and you see the result now,' were the words with which some people taunted me. But the taunt had no effect. 'I do not regret my advice,' said I. 'I maintain that we did well in taking part in the war. In doing so we simply did our duty. We may not look forward to any reward for our labours, but it is my firm conviction that all good action is bound to bear fruit in the end. Let us forget the past and think of the task before us.' With which the rest agreed.

I added: 'To tell you the truth the work for which you had called me is practically finished. But I believe I ought not to leave the Transvaal, so far as it is possible, even if you permit me to return home. Instead of carrying on my work from Natal, as before, I must now do so from here. I must no longer think of returning to India within a year, but must get enrolled in the Transvaal Supreme Court. I have confidence enough to deal with this new department. If we do not do this, the community will be hounded out of the country, besides being thoroughly robbed. Every day it will have fresh insults heaped upon it. The facts that Mr.

Chamberlain refused to see me and that the official insulted me, are nothing before the humiliation of the whole community. It will become impossible to put up with the veritable dog's life that we shall be expected to lead.'

So I set the ball rolling, discussed things with Indians in Pretoria and Johannesburg and ultimately decided to set up office in Johannesburg.

It was indeed doubtful whether I would be enrolled in the Transvaal Supreme Court. But the Law Society did not oppose my application, and the Court allowed it. It was difficult for an Indian to secure rooms for office in a suitable locality. But I had come in fairly close contact with Mr. Ritch, who was then one of the merchants there. Through the good offices of a house agent known to him, I succeeded in securing suitable rooms for my office in the legal quarters of the city, and I started on my professional work.

4. QUICKENED SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

Before I narrate the struggle for the Indian settlers rights in the Transvaal and their dealing with the Asiatic Department, I must turn to some other aspects of my life.

Up to now there had been in me a mixed desire. The spirit of self-sacrifice was tempered by the desire to lay by something for the future.

About the time I took up chambers in Bombay, an American insurance agent had come there—a man with a pleasing countenance and a sweet tongue. As though we were old friends he discussed my future welfare. 'All men of your status in America have their lives insured. Should you not also insure yourself against the future? Life is uncertain. We in America regard it as a religious obligation to get insured. Can I not tempt you to take out a small policy?'

Up to this time I had given the cold shoulder to all the agents I had met in South Africa and India, for I had thought that life assurance implied fear and want of faith in God. But now I succumbed to the temptation of the American agent. As he proceeded with his argument, I had before my mind's eye a picture of my wife and children. 'Man, you have sold almost all the ornaments of your wife,' I said to myself. 'If something were to happen to you, the burden of supporting her and the children would fall on your poor brother, who has so nobly filled the place of father. How would that become you?' With these and similar arguments I persuaded myself to take out a policy for Rs. 10,000.

But when my mode of life changed in South Africa, my outlook

changed too. All the steps I took at this time of trial were taken in the name of God and for His service. I did not know how long I should have to stay in South Africa. I had a fear that I might never be able to get back to India; so I decided to keep my wife and children with me and earn enough to support them. This plan made me deplore the life policy and feel ashamed of having been caught in the net of the insurance agent. If, I said to myself, my brother is really in the position of my father, surely he would not consider it too much of a burden to support my widow, if it came to that. And what reason had I to assume that death would claim me earlier than the others? After all the real protector was neither I nor my brother, but the Almighty. In getting my life insured I had robbed my wife and children of their self-reliance. Why should they not be expected to take care of themselves? What happened to the families of the numberless poor in the world? Why should I not count myself as one of them?

A multitude of such thoughts passed through my mind, but I did not immediately act upon them. I recollect having paid at least one insurance premium in South Africa.

Outward circumstances too supported this train of thought. During my first sojourn in South Africa it was Christian influence that had kept alive in me the religious sense. Now it was theosophical influence that added strength to it. Mr. Ritch was a theosophist and put me in touch with the society at Johannesburg. I never became a member, as I had my differences, but I came in close contact with almost every theosophist. I had religious discussions with them every day. There used to be readings from theosophical books and sometimes I had occasion to address their meetings. The chief thing about theosophy is to cultivate and promote the idea of brotherhood. We had considerable discussion over this, and I criticized the members where their conduct did not appear to me to square with their ideal. The criticism was not without its wholesome effect on me. It led to introspection.

5. RESULT OF INTROSPECTION

When, in 1893, I came in close contact with Christian friends. I was a mere novice. They tried hard to bring home to me, and make me accept, the message of Jesus, and I was a humble and respectful listener with an open mind. At that time I naturally studied Hinduism to the best of my ability and endeavoured to understand other religions.

In 1903 the position was somewhat changed. Theosophist friends

certainly intended to draw me into their society, but that was with a view to getting something from me as a Hindu. Theosophical literature is replete with Hindu influence, and so these friends expected that I should be helpful to them. I explained that my Samskrit study was not much to speak of, that I had not read the Hindu scriptures in the original, and that even my acquaintance with the translations was of the slightest. But being believers in *samskara* (tendencies caused by previous births) and *punarjanma* (rebirth), they assumed that I should be able to render at least some help. And so I felt like a Triton among the minnows. I started reading Swami Vivekananda's *Rajayoga* with some of these friends and M. N. Dvivedi's *Rajayoga* with others. I had to read Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* with one friend and the *Bhagavadgita* with quite a number. We formed a sort of Seekers' Club where we had regular readings. I already had faith in the Gita, which had a fascination for me. Now I realized the necessity of diving deeper into it. I had one or two translations, by means of which I tried to understand the original Sanskrit. I decided also to get by heart one or two verses every day. For this purpose I employed the time of my morning ablutions. The operation took me thirty-five minutes, fifteen minutes for the tooth brush and twenty for the bath. The first I used to do standing in western fashion. So on the wall opposite I struck slips of paper on which were written the Gita verses and referred to them now and then to help my memory. This time was found sufficient for memorising the daily portion and recalling the verses already learnt. I remember having thus committed to memory thirteen chapters. But the memorising of the Gita had to give way to other work and the creation and nurture of Satyagraha, which absorbed all my thinking time, as the latter may be said to be doing even now.

What effect this reading of the Gita had on my friends only they can say, but to me the Gita became an infallible guide of conduct. It became my dictionary of daily reference. Just as I turned to the English dictionary for the meanings of English words that I did not understand, I turned to this dictionary of conduct for a ready solution of all my troubles and trials. Words like *aparigraha* (non- possession) and *samabhava* (equability) gripped me. How to cultivate and preserve that equability was the question. How was one to treat alike insulting, insolent and corrupt officials, co-workers of yesterday raising meaningless opposition, and men who had always been good to one? How was one to divest oneself of all possessions? Was not the body itself possession enough? Were not wife and children possessions? Was I to destroy all the cupboards of books I had? Was I to give up all I had and follow Him? Straight came

the answer: I could not follow Him unless I gave up all I had. My study of English law came to my help. Snell's discussion of the maxims of Equity came to my memory. I understood more clearly in the light of the Gita teaching the implication of the word 'trustee'. My regard for jurisprudence increased, I discovered in it religion. I understood the Gita teaching of non-possession to mean that those who desired salvation should act like the trustee who, though having control over great possessions, regards not an iota of them as his own. It became clear to me as daylight that non-possession and equability presupposed a change of heart, a change of attitude. I then wrote to Revashankarbhai to allow the insurance policy to lapse and get whatever could be recovered, or else to regard the premiums already paid as lost, for I had become convinced that God, who created my wife and children as well as myself, would take care of them. To my brother, who had been as father to me, I wrote explaining that I had given him all that I had saved up to that moment, but that henceforth he should expect nothing from me, for future savings, if any, would be utilized for the benefit of the community.

I could not easily make my brother understand this. In stern language he explained to me my duty towards him. I should not, he said, aspire to be wiser than our father. I must support the family as he did. I pointed out to him that I was doing exactly what our father had done. The meaning of 'family' had but to be slightly widened and the wisdom of my step would become clear.

My brother gave me up and practically stopped all communication. I was deeply distressed, but it would have been a greater distress to give up what I considered to be my duty, and I preferred the lesser. But that did not affect my devotion to him, which remained as pure and great as ever. His great love for me was at the root of his misery. He did not so much want my money as that I should be well-behaved towards the family. Near the end of his life, however, he appreciated my view-point. When almost on his death-bed, he realized that my step had been right and wrote me a most pathetic letter. He apologized to me, if indeed a father may apologize to his son. He commended his sons to my care, to be brought up as I thought fit, and expressed his impatience to meet me. He cabled that he would like to come to South Africa and I cabled in reply that he could. But that was not to be. Nor could his desire as regards his sons be fulfilled. He died before he could start for South Africa. His sons had been brought up in the old atmosphere and could not change their course of life. I could not draw them to me. It was not their fault. 'Who can say thus far, no further, to the tide of his own nature?' Who can erase

the impressions with which he is born? It is idle to expect one's children and wards necessarily to follow the same course of evolution as oneself.

This instance to some extent serves to show what a terrible responsibility it is to be a parent.

6. A SACRIFICE TO VEGETARIANISM

As the ideals of sacrifice and simplicity were becoming more and more realized, consciousness was becoming more and more quickened in my daily life, the passion for vegetarianism as a mission went on increasing. I have known only one way of carrying on missionary work, viz., by personal example and discussion with searchers for knowledge.

There was in Johannesburg a vegetarian restaurant conducted by a German who believed in Kuhan's hydropathic treatment. I visited the restaurant myself and helped it by taking English friends there. But I saw that it could not last as it was always in financial difficulties. I assisted it as much as I thought it deserved, and spent some money on it, but it had ultimately to be closed down.

Most theosophists are vegetarians more or less, and an enterprising lady belonging to that society now came upon the scene with a vegetarian restaurant on a grand scale. She was fond of art, extravagant and ignorant of accounts. Her circle of friends was fairly large. She had started in a small way, but later decided to extend the venture by taking large rooms, and asked me for help. I knew nothing of her finances when she thus approached me, but I took it that her estimate must be fairly accurate. And I was in a position to accommodate her. My clients used to keep large sums as deposits with me. Having received the consent of one of these clients, I lent about a thousand pounds from the amount to his credit. This client was most large-hearted and trusting. He had originally come to South Africa as an indentured labourer. He said: 'Give away the money, if you like. I know nothing in these matters. I only know you.' His name was Badri. He afterwards took a prominent part in Satyagraha, and suffered imprisonment as well. So I advanced the loan assuming that this consent was enough.

In two or three months' time I came to know that the amount would not be recovered. I could ill afford to sustain such a loss. There were many other purposes to which I could have applied this amount. The loan was never repaid. But how could trusting Badri be allowed to suffer? He had known me only. I made good the loss.

A client friend to whom I spoke about this transaction sweetly chided

me for my folly.

‘Bhai,’ - I had fortunately not yet become ‘Mahatma’, nor even ‘Bapu’ (father) friends used to call me by the loving name of ‘Bhai’ (brother)-said he, ‘this was not for you to do. We depend upon you in so many things. You are not going to get back this amount. I know you will never allow Badri to come to grief, for you will pay him out of your pocket, but if you go on helping your reform schemes by operating on your clients’ money, the poor fellows will be ruined, and you will soon become a beggar. But you are our trustee and must know that, if you become a beggar, all our public work will come to a stop.’

The friend I am thankful to say, is still alive. I have not yet come across a purer man than he, in South Africa or anywhere else. I have known him to apologize to people and to cleanse himself, when, having happened to suspect them, he had found his suspicion to be unfounded.

I saw that he had rightly warned me. For though I made good Badri’s loss, I should not have been able to meet any similar loss and should have been driven to incur debt- a thing I have never done in my life and always abhorred. I realized that even a man’s reforming zeal ought not to make him exceed his limits. I also saw that in thus lending trust-money I had disobeyed the cardinal teaching of the Gita, viz, the duty of a man of equipoise to act without desire for the fruit. The error became for me a beaconlight of warning.

The sacrifice offered on the altar of vegetarianism was neither intentional nor expected. It was a virtue of necessity.

7. EXPERIMENTS IN EARTH AND WATER TREATMENT

With the growing simplicity of my life, my dislike for medicines steadily increased. While practising in Durban, I suffered for some time from debility and rheumatic inflammation. Dr. P. J. Mehta, who had come to see me, gave me treatment, and I got well. After that, up to the time when I returned to India, I do not remember having suffered from any ailment to speak of.

But I used to be troubled with constipation and frequent headaches, while at Johannesburg. I kept myself fit with occasional laxatives and a well-regulated diet. But I could hardly call myself healthy, and always wondered when I should get free from incubus of these laxative medicines.

About this time I read of the formation of a ‘No Breakfast Association’

in Manchester. The argument of the promoters was that Englishmen ate too often and too much, that their doctors' bills were heavy because they ate until midnight, and that they should at least give up breakfast, if they wanted to improve this state of affairs. Though all these things could not be said of me, I felt that the argument did partly apply in my case. I used to have three square meals daily in addition to afternoon tea. I was never a spare eater and enjoyed as many delicacies as could be had with a vegetarian and spiceless diet. I scarcely ever got up before six or seven. I therefore argued that, if I also dropped the morning breakfast, I might become free from headaches. So I tried the experiment. For a few days it was rather hard, but the headaches entirely disappeared. This led me to conclude that I was eating more than I needed.

But the change was far from relieving me of constipation. I tried Kuhne's hipbaths, which gave some relief but did not completely cure me. In the meantime the German who had a vegetarian restaurant, or some other friend, I forget who, placed in my hands Just's *Return of Nature*. In this book I read about earth treatment. The author also advocated fresh fruit and nuts as the natural diet of man. I did not at once take to the exclusive fruit diet, but immediately began experiments in earth treatment, and with wonderful results. The treatment consisted in applying to the abdomen a bandage of clean earth moistened with cold water and spread like a poultice on fine linen. This I applied at bed time, removing it during the night or in the morning, whenever, I happened to wake up. It proved a radical cure. Since then I have tried the treatment on myself and my friends and never had reason to regret it. In India I have not been able to try this treatment with equal confidence. For one thing. I have never had time to settle down in one place to conduct the experiments. But my faith in the earth and water treatment remains practically the same as before. Even today I give myself the earth treatment to a certain extent and recommend it to my co-workers, whenever occasion arises.

Though I have had two serious illnesses in my life, I believe that man has little need to drug himself. 999 cases out of a thousand can be brought round by means of a well-regulated diet, water and earth treatment and similar household remedies. He who runs to the doctor, vaidya or hakim for every little ailment, and swallows all kinds of vegetable and mineral drugs, not only curtails his life, but, by becoming the slave of his body instead of remaining its master, loses self-control, and ceases to be a man.

Let no one discount these observations because they are being written

in a sickbed. I know the reasons for my illnesses. I am fully conscious that I alone am responsible for them, and it is because of that consciousness that I have not lost patience. In fact I have thanked God for them as lessons and successfully resisted the temptation of taking numerous drugs. I know my obstinacy often tries my doctors, but they kindly bear with me and do not give me up.

However, I must not digress. Before proceeding further, I should give the reader a word of warning. Those who purchase Just's book on the strength of this chapter should not take everything in it to be gospel truth. A writer almost always presents one aspect of a case, whereas every case can be seen from no less than seven points of view, all of which are probably correct by themselves, but not correct at the same time and in the same circumstances. And then many books are written with a view to gaining customers and earning name and fame. Let those, therefore, who read such books as these do so with discernment, and take experiments set forth, or let them read the books with patience and digest them thoroughly before acting upon them.

8. A WARNING

I am afraid I must continue the digression until the next chapter. Along with my experiments in earth treatment, those in dietetics were also being carried on, and it may not be out of place here to make a few observations as regards the latter, though I shall have occasion to refer to them again later.

I may not, now or hereafter, enter into a detailed account of the experiments in dietetics, for I did so in a series of Gujarati articles which appeared years ago in Indian Opinion, and which were afterwards published in the form of a book popularly known in English as A Guide to Health. Among my little books this has been the most widely read alike in the East and in the West, a thing that I have not yet been able to understand. It was written for the benefit of the readers of Indian Opinion. But I know that the booklet has profoundly influenced the lives of many, both in the East and in the West, who have never seen Indian Opinion. For they have been corresponding with me on the subject. It has therefore appeared necessary to say something here about the booklet, for though I see no reason to alter the views set forth in it, yet I have made certain radical changes in my actual practice, of which all readers of the book do not know, and of which, I think, they should be informed.

The booklet was written, like all my other writings, with a spiritual

end, which has always inspired every one of my actions, and therefore it is a matter for deep distress to me that I am unable today to practise some of the theories propounded in the book.

It is my firm conviction that man need take no milk at all, beyond the mother's milk that he takes as a baby. His diet should consist of nothing but sunbaked fruits and nuts. He can secure enough nourishment both for the tissues and the nerves from fruits like grapes and nuts like almonds. Restraint of the sexual and other passions becomes easy for a man who lives on such food. My co-workers and I have seen by experience that there is much truth in the Indian proverb that as a man eats, so shall he become. These views have been set out elaborately in the book.

But unfortunately in India I have found myself obliged to deny some of my theories in practice. Whilst I was engaged on the recruiting campaign in Kheda, an error in diet laid me low, and I was at death's door. I tried in vain to rebuild a shattered constitution without milk. I sought the help of the doctors, vaidyas and scientists whom I knew, to recommend a substitute for milk. Some suggested mung water, some mowhra oil, some almond-milk. I wore out my body in experimenting on these, but nothing could help me to leave the sickbed. The vaidyas read verses to me from Charaka to show that religious scruples about diet have no place in therapeutics. So they could not be expected to help me to continue to live without milk. And how could those who recommended beef-tea and brandy without hesitation help me to persevere with a milkless diet?

I might not take cow's or buffalo's milk, as I was bound by a vow. The vow of course meant the giving up of all milks, but as I had mother cow's and mother buffalo's only in mind when I took the vow, and as I wanted to live, I somehow beguiled myself into emphasizing the letter of the vow and decided to take goat's milk. I was fully conscious, when I started taking mother goat's milk, that the spirit of my vow was destroyed.

But the idea of leading a campaign against the Rowlatt Act had possessed me. And with it grew the desire to live. Consequently one of the greatest experiments in my life came to a stop.

I know it is argued that the soul has nothing to do with what one eats or drinks, as the soul neither eats nor drinks; that it is not what you put inside from without, but what you express outwardly from within, that matters. There is no doubt some force in this. But rather than examine this reasoning. I shall content myself with merely declaring my firm conviction that, for the seeker who would live in fear of God and who would see Him face to face, restraint in diet both as to quantity and quality

is as essential as restraint in thought and speech.

In a matter, however, where my theory has failed me, I should not only give the information, but issue a grave warning against adopting it. I would therefore urge those who, on the strength of the theory propounded by me, may have given up milk, not to persist in the experiment, unless they find it beneficial in every way, or unless they are advised by experienced physicians. Up to now my experience here has shown me that for those with a weak digestion and for those who are confined to bed there is no light and nourishing diet equal to that of milk.

I should be greatly obliged if anyone with experience in this line, who happens to read this chapter, would tell me, if he has known from experience, and not from reading, of a vegetable substitute for milk, which is equally nourishing and digestible.

9. A TUSSLE WITH POWER

To turn now to the Asiatic Department.

Johannesburg was the stronghold of the Asiatic officers. I had been observing that, far from protecting the Indians, Chinese and others, these officers were grinding them down. Every day I had complaints like this: 'The rightful ones are not admitted, whilst those who have no right are smuggled in on payment of 100. If you will not remedy this state of things, who will?' I shared the feeling. If I did not succeed in stamping out this evil, I should be living in the Transvaal in vain.

So I began to collect evidence, and as soon as I had gathered a fair Amount, I approached the Police Commissioner. He appeared to be a just man. Far from giving me the cold shoulder, he listened to me patiently and asked me to show him all the evidence in my possession. He examined the witnesses himself and was satisfied, but he knew as well as I that it was difficult in South Africa to get a white jury to convict a white offender against coloured men. 'But,' said he, 'let us try at any rate. It is not proper either, to let such criminals go scot-free for fear of the jury acquitting them, I must get them arrested. I assure you I shall leave no stone unturned.'

I did not need the assurance. I suspected quite a number of officers, but as I had no unchallengeable evidence against them all, warrants of arrest were issued against the two about whose guilt I had not the slightest doubt.

My movements could never be kept secret. Many knew that I was going to the Police Commissioner practically daily. The two officers against whom warrants had been issued had spies more or less efficient.

They used to patrol my office and report my movements to the officers. I must admit, however, that these officers were so bad that they could not have had many spies. Had the Indians and the Chinese not helped me, they would never have been arrested.

One of these absconded. The Police Commissioner obtained an extradition warrant against him and got him arrested and brought to the Transvaal. They were tried, and although there was strong evidence against them, and in spite of the fact that the jury had evidence of one of them having absconded, both were declared to be not guilty and acquitted.

I was sorely disappointed. The Police Commissioner also was very sorry. I got disgusted with the legal profession. The very intellect became an abomination to me inasmuch as it could be prostituted for screening crime.

However, the guilt of both these officers was so patent that in spite of their acquittal the Government could not harbour them. Both were cashiered, and the Asiatic department became comparatively clean, and the Indian community was somewhat reassured.

The event enhanced my prestige and brought me more business. The bulk, though not all, of the hundreds of pounds that the community was monthly squandering in speculation, was saved. All could not be saved, for the dishonest still plied their trade. But it was now possible for the honest man to preserve his honesty.

I must say that, though these officers were so bad, I had nothing against them personally. They were aware of this themselves, and when in their straits they approached me, I helped them too. They had a chance of getting employed by the Johannesburg Municipality in case I did not oppose the proposal. A friend of theirs saw me in this connection and I agreed not to thwart them, and they succeeded.

This attitude of mine put the officials with whom I came in contact perfectly at ease, and though I had often to fight with their department and use strong language, they remained quite friendly with me. I was not then quite conscious that such behaviour was part of my nature. I learnt later that it was an essential part of Satyagraha, and an attribute of ahimsa.

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked always deserves respect or pity as the case may be. 'Hate the sin and not the sinner' is a precept which, though easy enough to understand, is rarely practised, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

This ahimsa is the basis of the search for truth. I am realizing every

day that the search is vain unless it is founded on ahimsa as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world.

10. A SACRED RECOLLECTION AND PENANCE

A variety of incidents in my life have conspired to bring me in close contact with people of many creeds and many communities, and my experience with all of them warrants the statement that I have known no distinction between relatives and strangers, countrymen and foreigners, white and coloured, Hindus and Indians of other faiths, whether Musalmans, Parsis, Christians or Jews. I may say that my heart has been incapable of making any such distinctions. I cannot claim this as a special virtue, as it is in my very nature. rather than a result of any effort on my part, whereas in the case of ahimsa (non- violence), brahmacharya (celibacy), aparigraha (non-possession) and other cardinal virtues, I am fully conscious of a continuous striving for their cultivation.

When I was practising in Durban, my office clerks often stayed with me, and there were among them Hindus and Christians, or to describe them by their provinces, Gujaratis and Tamilians. I do not recollect having ever regarded them as anything but my kith and kin. I treated them as members of my family, and had unpleasantness with my wife if ever she stood in the way of my treating them as such. One of the clerks was a Christian, born of Panchama parents.

The house was built after the Western model and the rooms rightly had no outlets for dirty water. Each room had therefore chamber-pots. Rather than have these cleaned by a servant or a sweeper, my wife or I attended to them. The clerks who made themselves completely at home would naturally clean their own pots, but the Christian clerk was a newcomer, and it was our duty to attend to his bedroom. My wife managed the pots of the others, but to clean those used by one who had been a Panchama seemed to her to be the limit, and we fell out. She could not bear the pots being cleaned by me, neither did she like doing it herself. Even today I can recall the picture of her chiding me, her eyes red with anger, and pearl drops streaming down her cheeks, as she descended the

ladder, pot in hand. But I was a cruelly kind husband. I regarded myself as her teacher, and so harassed her out of my blind love for her.

I was far from being satisfied by her merely carrying the pot. I would have her do it cheerfully. So I said, raising my voice: 'I will not stand this nonsense in my house.'

The words pierced her like an arrow.

She shouted back: 'Keep your house to yourself and let me go.' I forgot myself, and the spring of compassion dried up in me. I caught her by the hand, dragged the helpless woman to the gate, which was just opposite the ladder, and proceeded to open it with the intention of pushing her out. The tears were running down her cheeks in torrents, and she cried: 'Have you no sense of shame? Must you so far forget yourself? Where am I to go? I have no parents or relatives here to harbour me. Being your wife, you think I must put up with your cuffs and kicks? For Heaven's sake behave yourself, and shut the gate. Let us not be found making scenes like this!'

I put on a brave face, but was really ashamed and shut the gate. If my wife could not leave me, neither could I leave her. We have had numerous bickerings, but the end has always been peace between us. The wife, with her matchless powers of endurance, has always been the victor.

Today I am in a position to narrate the incident with some detachment, as it belongs to a period out of which I have fortunately emerged. I am no longer a blind, infatuated husband, I am no more my wife's teacher. Kasturba can, if she will, be as unpleasant to me today, as I used to be to her before. We are tried friends, the one no longer regarding the other as the object of lust. She has been a faithful nurse throughout my illnesses, serving without any thought of reward.

The incident in question occurred in 1898, when I had no conception of brahmacharya. It was a time when I thought that the wife was the object of her husband's lust, born to do her husband's behest, rather than a helpmate, a comrade and a partner in the husband's joys and sorrows.

It was in the year 1900 that these ideas underwent a radical transformation, and in 1906 they took concrete shape. But of this I propose to speak in its proper place. Suffice it to say that with the gradual disappearance in me of the carnal appetite, my domestic life became and is becoming more and more peaceful, sweet and happy.

Let no one conclude from this narrative of a sacred recollection that we are by any means an ideal couple, or that there is a complete identity of ideals between us. Kasturba herself does not perhaps know whether she has any ideals independently of me. It is likely that many of my doings

have not her approval even today. We never discuss them, I see no good in discussing them. For she was educated neither by her parents nor by me at the time when I ought to have done it. But she is blessed with one great quality to a very considerable degree, a quality which most Hindu wives possess in some measure. And it is this; willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously, she has considered herself blessed in following in my footsteps, and has never stood in the way of my endeavour to lead a life of restraint. Though, therefore, there is a wide difference between us intellectually, I have always had the feeling that ours is a life of contentment, happiness and progress.

11. INTIMATE EUROPEAN CONTACTS

This chapter has brought me to a stage where it becomes necessary for me to explain to the reader how this story is written from week to week.

When I began writing it, I had no definite plan before me. I have no diary or documents on which to base the story of my experiments. I write just as the Spirit moves me at the time of writing. I do not claim to know definitely that all conscious thought and action on my part is directed by the Spirit. But on an examination of the greatest steps that I have taken in my life, as also of those that may be regarded as the least, I think it will not be improper to say that all of them were directed by the Spirit.

I have not seen Him, neither have I known Him. I have made the world's faith in God my own, and as my faith is ineffaceable, I regard that faith as amounting to experience. However, as it may be said that to describe faith as experience is to tamper with truth, it may perhaps be more correct to say that I have no word for characterizing my belief in God.

It is perhaps now somewhat easy to understand why I believe that I am writing story as the Spirit prompts me. When I began the last chapter I gave it the heading I have given to this, but as I was writing it, I realized that before I narrated my experiences with Europeans, I must write something by way of a preface. This I did and altered the heading.

Now again, as I start on this chapter, I find myself confronted with a fresh problem. What things to mention and what to omit regarding the English friends of whom I am about to write is a serious problem. If things that are relevant are omitted, truth will be dimmed. And it is difficult to decide straightway what is relevant, when I am not even sure about the

relevancy of writing this story.

I understand more clearly today what I read long ago about the inadequacy of all autobiography as history. I know that I do not set down in this story all that I remember. Who can say how much I must give and how much omit in the interests of truth? And what would be the value in a court of law of the inadequate *ex parte* evidence being tendered by me of certain events in my life? If some busybody were to cross-examine me on the chapters already written, he could probably shed much more light on them, and if it were a hostile critic's cross-examination, he might even flatter himself for having shown up 'the hollowness of many of my pretensions.'

I, therefore, wonder for a moment whether it might not be proper to stop writing these chapters. But so long as there is no prohibition from the voice within, I must continue the writing. I must follow the sage maxim that nothing once begun should be abandoned unless it is proved to be morally wrong.

I am not writing the autobiography to please critics. Writing it is itself one of the experiments with truth. One of its objects is certainly to provide some comfort and food for reflection for my co-workers. Indeed I started writing it in compliance with their wishes. It might not have been written, if Jeramdas and Swami Anand had not persisted in their suggestion. If, therefore, I am wrong in writing the autobiography, they must share the blame.

But to take up the subject indicated in the heading. Just as I had Indians living with me as members of my family, so had I English friends living with me in Durban. Not that all who lived with me liked it. But I persisted in having them. Nor was I wise in every case. I had some bitter experiences, but these included both Indians and Europeans. And I do not regret the experiences. In spite of them, and in spite of the inconvenience and worry that I have often caused to friends, I have not altered my conduct and friends have kindly borne with me. Whenever my contacts with strangers have been painful to friends, I have not hesitated to blame them. I hold that believers who have to see the same God in others that they see in themselves, must be able to live amongst all with sufficient detachment. And the ability to live thus can be cultivated, not by fighting shy of unsought opportunities for such contacts, but by hailing them in a spirit of service and withal keeping oneself unaffected by them.

Though, therefore, my house was full when the Boer War broke out, I received two Englishmen who had come from Johannesburg. Both were theosophists, one of them being Mr. Kitchin, of whom we shall have

occasion to know more later. These friends often cost my wife bitter tears. Unfortunately she has had many such trials on my account. This was the first time that I had English friends to live with me as intimately as members of my family. I had stayed in English houses during my days in England, but there I conformed to their ways of living, and it was more or less like living in a boarding house. Here it was quite the contrary. The English friends became members of the family. They adopted the Indian style in many matters. Though the appointments in the house were in the Western fashion, the internal life was mostly Indian. I do remember having had some difficulty in keeping them as members of the family, but I can certainly say that they had no difficulty in making themselves perfectly at home under my roof. In Johannesburg these contacts developed further than in Durban.

12. EUROPEAN CONTACTS (Contd.)

In Johannesburg I had at one time as many as four Indian clerks, who were perhaps more like my sons than clerks. But even these were not enough for my work. It was impossible to do without typewriting, which, among us, if at all, only I knew. I taught it to two of the clerks, but they never came up to the mark because of their poor English. And then one of these I wanted to train as an accountant. I could not get out anyone from Natal, for nobody could enter the Transvaal without a permit, and for my own personal convenience I was not prepared to ask a favour of the Permit Officer.

I was at my wits' end. Arrears were fast mounting up, so much so that it seemed impossible for me, however much I might try, to cope with professional and public work. I was quite willing to engage a European clerk, but I was not sure to get a white man or woman to serve a coloured man like myself. However I decided to try. I approached a typewriter's agent whom I knew, and asked him to get me a stenographer. There were girls available, and he promised to try to secure the services of one. He came across a Scotch girl called Miss Dick, who had just come fresh from Scotland. She had no objection to earning an honest livelihood, wherever available, and she was in need. So the agent sent her on to me. She immediately prepossessed me.

'Don't you mind serving under an Indian?' I asked her.

'Not at all,' was her firm reply.

'What salary do you expect?'

'Would £ 17 10s. be too much?'

‘Not too much if you will give me the work I want from you. When can you join?’

‘This moment if you wish.’

I was very pleased and straightaway started dictating letters to her.

Before very long she became more a daughter or a sister to me than a mere stenotypist. I had scarcely any reason to find fault with her work. She was often entrusted with the management of funds amounting to thousands of pounds, and she was in charge of account books. She won my complete confidence, but what was perhaps more, she confided to me her innermost thoughts and feelings. She sought my advice in the final choice of her husband, and I had the privilege to give her away in marriage. As soon as Miss Dick became Mrs. Macdonald, she had to leave me, but even after her marriage she did not fail to respond, whenever under pressure I made a call upon her.

But a permanent stenotypist was now needed in her place, and I was fortunate in getting another girl. She was Miss Schlesin, introduced to me by Mr. Kallenbach, whom the reader will know in due course. She is at present a teacher in one of the High School in the Transvaal. She was about seventeen when she came to me. Some of her idiosyncrasies were at times too much for Mr. Kallenbach and me. She had come less to work as a stenotypist than to gain experience. Colour prejudice was foreign to her temperament. She seemed to mind neither age nor experience. She would not hesitate even to the point of insulting a man and telling him to his face what she thought of him. Her impetuosity often landed me in difficulties, but her open and guileless temperament removed them as soon as they were created. I have often signed without revision letters typed by her, as I considered her English to be better than mine, and had the fullest confidence in her loyalty.

Her sacrifice was great. For a considerable period she did not draw more than £ 6, and refused ever to receive more than £ 10 a month. When I urged her to take more, she would give me a scolding and say, ‘I am not here to draw a salary from you. I am here because I like to work with you and I like your ideals.’

She had once an occasion to take £ 40 from me, but she insisted on having it as a loan, and repaid the full amount last year. Her courage was equal to her sacrifice. She is one of the few women I have been privileged to come across, with a character as clear as crystal and courage that would shame a warrior. She is a grown up woman now. I do not know her mind quite as well as when she was with me, but my contact with this young lady will ever be for me a sacred recollection. I would therefore be false

to truth if I kept back what I know about her.

She knew neither night nor day in toiling for the cause. She ventured out on errands in the darknes of the night all by herself, and angrily scouted any suggestion of an escort. Thousands of stalwart Indians looked up to her for guidance. When during the Satyagraha days almost every one of the leaders was in jail, she led the movement single-handed. She had the management of thousands, a tremendous amount of correspondence, and Indian Opinion in her hands, but she never wearied.

I could go on without end writing thus about Miss Schlesin, but I shall conclude this chapter with citing Gokhale's estimate of her. Gokhale knew every one of my co-workers. He was pleased with many of them, and would often give his opinion of them. He gave the first place to Miss Schlesin amongst all the Indian and European co-workers. 'I have rarely met with the sacrifice, the purity and the fearlessness I have seen in Miss Schlesin,' said he. 'Amongst your co-workers, she takes the first place in my estimation.'

13. 'INDIAN OPINION'

Before I proceed with the other intimate European contacts, I must note two or three items of importance. One of the contacts, however, should be mentioned at once. The appointment of Miss Dick was not enough for my purpose. I needed more assistance. I have in the earlier chapters referred to Mr. Ritch. I knew him well. He was manager in a commercial firm. He approved my suggestion of leaving the firm and getting articted under me, and he considerably lightened my burden.

About this time Sjt. Madanjit approached me with a proposal to start Indian Opinion and sought my advice. He had already been conducting a press, and I approved of his proposal. The journal was launched in 1904, and Sjt. Mansukhlal Naazar became the first editor. But I had to bear the brunt of the work, having for most of the time to be practically in charge of the journal. Not that Sjt. Mansukhlal could not carry it on. He had been doing a fair amount of journalism whilst in India, but he would never venture to write on intricate South African problems so long as I was there. He had the greatest confidence in my discernment, and therefore threw on me the responsibility of attending to the editorial columns. The journal has been until this day a weekly. In the beginning it used to be issued in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil and English. I saw, however, that the Tamil and Hindi sections were a make-believe. They did not serve the purpose for which they were intended, so I discontinued them as I even

felt that there would be a certain amount of deception involved in their continuance.

I had no notion that I should have to invest any money in this journal, but I soon discovered that it could not go on without my financial help. The Indians and the Europeans both knew that, though I was not avowedly the editor of Indian Opinion, I was virtually responsible for its conduct. It would not have mattered if the journal had never been started, but to stop it after it had once been launched would have been both a loss and a disgrace. So I kept on pouring out my money, until ultimately I was practically sinking all my savings in it. I remember a time when I had to remit £ 75 each month.

But after all these years I feel that the journal has served the community well. It was never intended to be a commercial concern. So long as it was under my control, the changes in the journal were indicative of changes in my life. Indian Opinion in those days, like Young India and Navajivan today, was a mirror of part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns, and expounded the principles and practice of Satyagraha as I understood it. During ten years, that is, until 1914, excepting the intervals of my enforced rest in prison, there was hardly an issue of Indian Opinion without an article from me. I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation, or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal became for me a training in self-restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. The critic found very little to which he could object. In fact the tone of Indian Opinion compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen. Satyagraha would probably have been impossible without Indian Opinion. The readers looked forward to it for a trustworthy account of the Satyagraha campaign as also of the real condition of Indians in South Africa. For me it became a means for the study of human nature in all its casts and shades, as I always aimed at establishing an intimate and clean bond between the editor and the readers. I was inundated with letters containing the outpourings of my correspondents' hearts. They were friendly, critical or bitter, according to the temper of the writer. It was a fine education for me to study, digest and answer all this correspondence. It was as though the community thought audibly through this correspondence with me. It made me thoroughly understand the responsibility of a journalist, and the hold I secured in this way over the community made the future campaign workable, dignified and irresistible.

In the very first month of Indian Opinion, I realized that the sole aim

of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countrysides and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? And who should be the judge? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice.

14. COOLIE LOCATIONS OR GHETTOS?

Some of the classes which render us the greatest social service, but which we Hindus have chosen to regard as 'untouchables,' are relegated to remote quarters of a town or a village, called in Gujarati *dhedvado*, and the name has acquired a bad odour. Even so in Christian Europe the Jews were once 'untouchables' and the quarters that were assigned to them had the offensive name of 'ghettoes.' In a similar way today we have become the untouchables of South Africa. It remains to be seen how far the sacrifice of Andrews and the magic wand of Shastri succeed in rehabilitating us.

The ancient Jews regarded themselves as the chosen people of God, to the exclusion of all others, with the result that their descendants were visited with a strange and even unjust retribution. Almost in a similar way the Hindus have considered themselves Aryas or civilized, and a section of their own kith and kin as Anaryas or untouchables, with the result that a strange, if unjust, nemesis is being visited not only upon the Hindus in South Africa, but the Musalmans and Parsis as well, inasmuch as they belong to the same country and have the same colour as their Hindu brethren.

The reader will have now realized to some extent the meaning of the word 'locations' with which I have headed this chapter. In South Africa we have acquired the odious name of 'coolies'. The word 'coolie' in India means only a porter or hired workman, but in South Africa it has a contemptuous connotation. It means what a pariah or an untouchable means to us, and the quarters assigned to the 'coolies' are known as 'coolie locations'. Johannesburg had one such location, but unlike other places with locations where the Indians had tenancy rights, in the Johannesburg location the Indians had acquired their plots on a lease of 99 years. People were densely packed in the location, the area of which never increased

with the increase in population. Beyond arranging to clean the latrines in the location in a haphazard way, the Municipality did nothing to provide any sanitary facilities, much less good roads or lights. It was hardly likely that it would safeguard its sanitation, when it was indifferent to the welfare of the residents. These were too ignorant of the rules of municipal sanitation and hygiene to do without the help or supervision of the Municipality. If those who went there had all been Robinson Crusoes, theirs would have been a different story. But we do not know of a single emigrant colony of Robinson Crusoes in the world. Usually people migrate abroad in search of wealth and trade, but the bulk of the Indians who went to South Africa were ignorant, pauper agriculturists, who needed all the care and protection that could be given them. The traders and educated Indians who followed them were very few.

The criminal negligence of the Municipality and the ignorance of the Indian settlers thus conspired to render the location thoroughly insanitary. The Municipality, far from doing anything to improve the condition of the location, used the insanitation, caused by their own neglect, as a pretext for destroying the location, and for that purpose obtained from the local legislature authority to dispossess the settlers. This was the condition of things when I settled in Johannesburg.

The settlers, having proprietary rights in their land, were naturally entitled to compensation. A special tribunal was appointed to try the land acquisition cases. If the tenant was not prepared to accept the offer of the Municipality, he had a right to appeal to the tribunal, and if the latter's award exceeded the Municipality's offer, the Municipality had to bear the costs.

Most of the tenants engaged me as their legal adviser. I had no desire to make money out of these cases, so I told the tenants that I should be satisfied with whatever costs the tribunal awarded, in case they won, and a fee of £ 10 on every lease, irrespective of the result of the case. I also told them that I proposed to set apart half of the money paid by them for the building of a hospital or similar institution for the poor. This naturally pleased them all.

Out of about 70 cases only one was lost. So the fees amounted to a fairly big figure. But Indian Opinion was there with its persistent claim and devoured, so far as I can recollect, a sum of £ 1,600. I had worked hard for these cases. The clients always surrounded me. Most of them were originally indentured labourers from Bihar and its neighbourhood and from South India. For the redress of their peculiar grievances they had formed an association of their own, separate from that of the free

Indian merchants and traders. Some of them were open- hearted, liberal men and had high character. Their leaders were Sjt. Jairamsing, the president, and Sjt. Badri, who was as good as the president. Both of them are now no more. They were exceedingly helpful to me. Sjt. Badri came in very close contact with me and took a prominent part in Satyagraha. Through these and other friends I came in intimate contact with numerous Indian settlers from North and South India. I became more their brother than a mere legal adviser, and shared in all their private and public sorrows and hardships.

It may be of some interest to know how the Indians used to name me. Abdulla Sheth refused to address me as Gandhi. None, fortunately, ever insulted me by calling or regarding me as 'saheb'. Abdulla Sheth hit upon a fine appellation-'bhai', i.e., brother. Others followed him and continued to address me as 'bhai' until the moment I left when it was used by the ex-indentured Indians.

15. THE BLACK PLAGUE - I

The Indians were not removed from the location as soon as the Municipality secured its ownership. It was necessary to find the residents suitable new quarters before dislodging them, but as the Municipality could not easily do this, the Indians were suffered to stay in the same 'dirty' location, with this difference that their condition became worse than before. Having ceased to be proprietors they became tenants of the Municipality, with the result that their surroundings became more insanitary than ever. When they were proprietors, they had to maintain some sort of cleanliness, if only for fear of the law. The Municipality had no such fear! The number of tenants increased, and with them the squalor and the disorder.

While the Indians were fretting over this state of things, there was a sudden outbreak of the black plague, also called the pneumonic plague, more terrible and fatal than the bubonic.

Fortunately it was not the location but one of the gold mines in the vicinity of Johannesburg that was responsible for the outbreak. The workers in this mine were for the most part negroes, for whose cleanliness their white employers were solely responsible. There were a few Indians also working in connection with the mine, twenty-three of whom suddenly caught the infection, and returned one evening to their quarters in the location with an acute attack of the plague. Sjt. Madanjit, who was then canvassing subscribers for Indian Opinion and realizing subscriptions,

happened to be in the location at this moment. He was a remarkably fearless man. His heart wept to see these victims of the scourge, and he sent a pencil-note to me to the following effect: 'There has been a sudden outbreak of the black plague. You must come immediately and take prompt measures, otherwise we must be prepared for dire consequences. Please come immediately.'

Sjt. Madanjit bravely broke open the lock of a vacant house, and put all the patients there. I cycled to the location, and wrote to the Town Clerk to inform him of the circumstances in which we had taken possession of the house.

Dr. William Godfrey, who was practising in Johannesburg, ran to the rescue as soon as he got the news, and became both nurse and doctor to the patients. But twenty-three patients were more than three of us could cope with.

It is my faith, based on experience, that if one's heart is pure, calamity brings in its train men and measures to fight it. I had at that time four Indians in my office Sjts. Kalyandas, Maneklal, Gunvantrai Desai and another whose name I cannot recollect. Kalyandas had been entrusted to me by his father. In South Africa I have rarely come across anyone more obliging and willing to render implicit obedience than Kalyandas. Fortunately he was unmarried then, and I did not hesitate to impose on him duties involving risks, however great. Maneklal I had secured in Johannesburg. He too, so far as I can remember, was unmarried. So I decided to sacrifice all four - call them clerks, co-workers or sons. There was no need at all to consult Kalyandas. The others expressed their readiness as soon as they were asked. 'Where you are, we will also be', was their short and sweet reply.

Mr. Ritch had a large family. He was ready to take the plunge, but I prevented him. I had not the heart to expose him to the risk. So he attended to the work outside the danger zone.

It was a terrible night - that night of vigil and nursing. I had nursed a number of patients before, but never any attacked by the black plague. Dr. Godfrey's pluck proved infectious. There was not much nursing required. To give them their doses of medicine, to attend to their wants, to keep them and their beds clean and tidy, and to cheer them up was all that we had to do.

The indefatigable zeal and fearlessness with which the youths worked rejoiced me beyond measure. One could understand the bravery of Dr. Godfrey and of an experienced man like Sjt. Madanjit. But the spirit of

these callow youths!

So far as I can recollect, we pulled all the patients through that night.

But the whole incident, apart from its pathos, is of such absorbing interest and, for me, of such religious value, that I must devote to it at least two more chapters.

16. THE BLACK PLAGUE - II

The Town Clerk expressed his gratitude to me for having taken charge of the vacant house and the patients. He frankly confessed that the Town Council had no immediate means to cope with such an emergency, but promised that they would render all the help in their power. Once awakened to a sense of their duty, the Municipality made no delay in taking prompt measures.

The next day they placed a vacant godown at my disposal, and suggested that the patients be removed there, but the Municipality did not undertake to clean the premises. The building was unkempt and unclean. We cleaned it up ourselves, raised a few beds and other necessities through the offices of charitable Indians, and improvised a temporary hospital. The Municipality lent the services of a nurse, who came with brandy and other hospital equipment. Dr. Godfrey still remained in charge.

The nurse was a kindly lady and would fain have attended to the patients, but we rarely allowed her to touch them, lest she should catch the contagion.

We had instructions to give the patients frequent doses of brandy. The nurse even asked us to take it for precaution, just as she was doing herself. But none of us would touch it. I had no faith in its beneficial effect even for the patients. With the permission of Dr. Godfrey, I put three patients, who were prepared to do without brandy, under the earth treatment, applying wet earth bandages to their heads and chests. Two of these were saved. The other twenty died in the godown.

Meanwhile the Municipality was busy taking other measures. There was a lazaretto for contagious diseases about seven miles from Johannesburg. The two surviving patients were removed to tents near the lazaretto, and arrangements were made for sending any fresh cases there. We were thus relieved of our work.

In the course of a few days we learnt that the good nurse had an attack and immediately succumbed. It is impossible to say how the two patients were saved and how we remained immune, but the experience

enhanced my faith in earth treatment, as also my scepticism of the efficacy of brandy, even as a medicine. I know that neither this faith nor this scepticism is based upon any solid grounds, but I still retain the impression which I then received, and have therefore thought it necessary to mention it here.

On the outbreak of the plague, I had addressed a strong letter to the press, holding the Municipality guilty of negligence after the location came into its possession and responsible for the outbreak of the plague itself. This letter secured me Mr. Henry Polak, and was partly responsible for the friendship of the late Rev. Joseph Doke.

I have said in an earlier chapter that I used to have my meals at a vegetarian restaurant. Here I met Mr. Albert West. We used to meet in this restaurant every evening and go out walking after dinner. Mr. West was a partner in a small printing concern. He read my letter in the press about the outbreak of the plague and, not finding me in the restaurant, felt uneasy.

My co-workers and I had reduced our diet since the outbreak, as I had long made it a rule to go on a light diet during epidemics. In these days I had therefore given up my evening dinner. Lunch also I would finish before the other guests arrived. I knew the proprietor of the restaurant very well, and I had informed him that, as I was engaged in nursing the plague patients, I wanted to avoid the contact of friends as much as possible.

Not finding me in the restaurant for a day or two, Mr. West knocked at my door early one morning just as I was getting ready to go out for a walk. As I opened the door Mr. West said: 'I did not find you in the restaurant and was really afraid lest something should have happened to you. So I decided to come and see you in the morning in order to make sure of finding you at home. Well, here I am at your disposal. I am ready to help in nursing the patients. You know that I have no one depending on me.'

I expressed my gratitude, and without taking even a second to think, replied: 'I will not have you as a nurse. If there are no more cases, we shall be free in a day or two. There is one thing however.'

'Yes, what is it?'

'Could you take charge of the Indian Opinion press at Durban? Mr. Madanjit is likely to be engaged here, and someone is needed at Durban. If you could go, I should feel quite relieved on that score.'

'You know that I have a press. Most probably I shall be able to go,

but may I give my final reply in the evening? We shall talk it over during our evening walk.

I was delighted. We had the talk. He agreed to go. Salary was no consideration to him, as money was not his motive, But a salary £10 per month and a part of the profits, if any, was fixed up. The very next day Mr. West left for Durban by the evening mail, entrusting me with the recovery of his dues. From that day until the time I left the shores of South Africa, he remained a partner of my joys and sorrows.

Mr. West belonged to a peasant family in Louth (Lincolnshire). He had an ordinary school education, but had learnt a good deal in the school of experience and by dint of self-help. I have always known him to be a pure, sober, god-fearing, humane Englishman.

We shall know more of him and his family in the chapters to follow.

17. LOCATION IN FLAMES

Though my co-workers and I were relieved of the charge of the patients, there remained many things arising out of the black plague still to be dealt with.

I have referred to the negligence of the Municipality regarding the location. But it was wide awake so far as the health of its white citizens was concerned. It had spent large amounts for the preservation of their health and now it poured forth money like water in order to stamp out the plague. In spite of the many sins of omission and commission against the Indians that I had laid at the door of the Municipality, I could not help commending its solicitude for the white citizens, and I rendered it as much help as I could in its laudable efforts. I have an impression that, if I had withheld my co-operation, the task would have been more difficult for the Municipality, and that it would not have hesitated to use armed force and do its worst.

But all that was averted. The Municipal authorities were pleased at the Indians' behaviour, and much of the future work regarding plague measures was simplified. I used all the influence I could command with the Indians to make them submit to the requirements of the Municipality. It was far from easy for the Indians to go all that length, but I do not remember anyone having resisted my advice.

The location was put under a strong guard, passage in and out being made impossible without permission. My co-workers and I had free permits of entry and exit. The decision was to make the whole location population vacate, and live under canvas for three weeks in an open plain

about thirteen miles from Johannesburg, and then to set fire to the location. To settle down under canvas with provisions and other necessities was bound to take some time, and a guard became necessary during the interval.

The people were in a terrible fright, but my constant presence was a consolation to them. Many of the poor people used to hoard their scanty savings underground. This had to be unearthed. They had no bank, they knew none. I became their banker. Streams of money poured into my office. I could not possibly charge any fees for my labours in such a crisis. I coped with the work somehow. I knew my bank manager very well. I told him that I should have to deposit these moneys with him. The banks were by no means anxious to accept large amounts of copper and silver. There was also the fear of bank clerks refusing to touch money coming from a plague-affected area. But the manager accommodated me in every way. It was decided to disinfect all the money before sending it to the bank. So far as I can remember, nearly sixty thousand pounds were thus deposited. I advised such of the people as had enough money to place it as fixed deposit, and they accepted the advice. The result was some of them became accustomed to invest their money in banks.

The location residents were removed by special train to Klipspruit Farm near Johannesburg, where they were supplied with provisions by the Municipality at public expense. This city under canvas looked like a military camp. The people who were unaccustomed to this camp life were distressed and astonished over the arrangements; but they did not have to put up with any particular inconvenience. I used to cycle out to them daily. Within twenty-four hours of their stay they forgot all their misery and began to live merrily. Whenever I went there I found them enjoying themselves with song and mirth. Three weeks' stay in the open air evidently improved their health.

So far as I recollect, the location was put to the flames on the very next day after its evacuation. The Municipality showed not the slightest inclination to save anything from the conflagration. About this very time, and for the same reason, the Municipality burnt down all its timber in the market, and sustained a loss of some ten thousand pounds. The reason for this drastic step was the discovery of some dead rats in the market.

The Municipality had to incur heavy expenditure, but it successfully arrested the further progress of the plague, and the city once more breathed freely.

18. THE MAGIC SPELL OF A BOOK

The black plague enhanced my influence with the poor Indians, and increased my business and my responsibility. Some of the new contacts with Europeans became so close that they added considerably to my moral obligations.

I made the acquaintance of Mr. Polak in the vegetarian restaurant, just as I had made that of Mr. West. One evening a young man dining at a table a little way off sent me his card expressing a desire to see me. I invited him to come to my table, which he did.

‘I am sub-editor of the *The Critic*,’ he said ‘When I read your letter to the press about the plague. I felt a strong desire to see you. I am glad to have this opportunity.’

Mr. Polak’s candour drew me to him. The same evening we got to know each other. We seemed to hold closely similar views on the essential things of life. He liked simple life. He had a wonderful faculty of translating into practice anything that appealed to his intellect. Some of the changes that he had made in his life were as prompt as they were radical.

Indian Opinion was getting more and more expensive every day. The very first report from Mr. West was alarming. He wrote: ‘I do not expect the concern to yield the profit that you had thought probable. I am afraid there may be even a loss. The books are not in order. There are heavy arrears to be recovered, but one cannot make head or tail of them. Considerable overhauling will have to be done. But all this need not alarm you. I shall try to put things right as best I can. I remain on, whether there is profit or not.’

Mr. West might have left when he discovered that there was no profit, and I could not have blamed him. In fact, he had a right to arraign me for having described the concern as profitable without proper proof. But he never so much as uttered one word of complaint. I have, however, an impression that this discovery led Mr. West to regard me as credulous. I had simply accepted Sjt. Madanjit’s estimate without caring to examine it, and told Mr. West to expect a profit.

I now realize that a public worker should not make statements of which he has not made sure. Above all, a votary of truth must exercise the greatest caution. To allow a man to believe a thing which one has fully verified is to compromise truth. I am pained to have to confess that, in spite of this knowledge, I have not quite conquered my credulous habit, for which my ambition to do more work than I can manage is responsible.

This ambition has often been a source of worry more to my co-workers than to myself.

On receipt of Mr. West's letter I left for Natal. I had taken Mr. Polak into my fullest confidence. He came to see me off at the Station, and left with me a book to read during the journey, which he said I was sure to like. It was Ruskin's *Unto This Last*.

The book was impossible to lay aside, once I had begun it. It gripped me. Johannesburg to Durban was a twenty-four hours' journey. The train reached there in the evening. I could not get any sleep that night. I determined to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book.

This was the first book of Ruskin I had ever read. During the days of my education I had read practically nothing outside text-books, and after I launched into active life I had very little time for reading. I cannot therefore claim much book knowledge. However, I believe I have not lost much because of this enforced restraint. On the contrary, the limited reading may be said to have enabled me thoroughly to digest what I did read. Of these books, the one that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life was *Unto This Last*. I translated it later into Gujarati, entitling it *Sarvodaya* (the welfare of all).

I believe that I discovered some of my deepest convictions reflected in this great book of Ruskin, and that is why it so captured me and made me transform my life. A poet is one who can call forth the good latent in the human breast. Poets do not influence all alike, for everyone is not evolved in an equal measure.

The teaching of *Unto This Last* I understood to be:

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.
3. That a life of labour, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living.

The first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realized. The third had never occurred to me. *Unto This Last* made it as clear as daylight for me that the second and the third were contained in the first. I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice.

19. THE PHOENIX SETTLEMENT

I talked over the whole thing with Mr. West, described to him the effect *Unto This Last* had produced on my mind, and proposed that Indian Opinion should be removed to a farm, on which everyone should labour,

drawing the same living wage, and attending to the press work in spare time. Mr. West approved of the proposal, and £3 was laid down as the monthly allowance per head, irrespective of colour or nationality.

But it was a question whether all the ten or more workers in the press would agree to go and settle on an out-of-the-way farm, and be satisfied with bare maintenance. We therefore proposed that those who could not fit in with the scheme should continue to draw their salaries and gradually try to reach the ideal of becoming members of the settlement.

I talked to the workers in the terms of this proposal. It did not appeal to Sjt. Madanjit, who considered my proposal to be foolish and held that it would ruin a venture on which he had staked his all; that the workers would bolt, Indian Opinion would come to a stop, and the press would have to be closed down.

Among the men working in the press was Chhaganlal Gandhi, one of my cousins. I had put the proposal to him at the same time as to West. He had a wife and children, but he had from childhood chosen to be trained and to work under me. He had full faith in me. So without any argument he agreed to the scheme and has been with me ever since. The machinist Govindaswami also fell in with the proposal. The rest did not join the scheme, but agreed to go wherever I removed the press.

I do not think I took more than two days to fix up these matters with the men. Thereafter I at once advertised for a piece of land situated near a railway station in the vicinity of Durban. An offer came in respect of Phoenix. Mr. West and I went to inspect the estate. Within a week we purchased twenty acres of land. It had a nice little spring and a few orange and mango trees. Adjoining it was a piece of 80 acres which had many more fruit trees and a dilapidated cottage. We purchased this too, the total cost being a thousand pounds.

The late Mr. Rustomji always supported me in such enterprises. He liked the project. He placed at my disposal second-hand corrugated iron sheets of a big godown and other building material, with which we started work. Some Indian carpenters and masons, who had worked with me in the Boer War, helped me in erecting a shed for the press. This structure, which was 75 feet long and 50 feet broad, was ready in less than a month. Mr. West and others, at great personal risk, stayed with the carpenters and masons. The place, uninhabited and thickly overgrown with grass, was infested with snakes and obviously dangerous to live in. At first all lived under canvas. We carted most of our things to Phoenix in about a week. It was fourteen miles from Durban, and two and a half miles from Phoenix station.

Only one issue of Indian Opinion had to be printed outside, in the Mercury press.

I now endeavoured to draw to Phoenix those relations and friends who had come with me from India to try their fortune, and who were engaged in business of various kinds. They had come in search of wealth, and it was therefore difficult to persuade them; but some agreed. Of these I can single out here only Manganlal Gandhi's name. The others went back to business. Manganlal Gandhi left his business for good to cast in his lot with me, and by ability, sacrifice and devotion stands foremost among my original co-workers in my ethical experiments. As a self-taught handicraftsman his place among them is unique.

Thus the Phoenix Settlement was started in 1904, and there in spite of numerous odds Indian Opinion continues to be published.

But the initial difficulties, the changes made, the hopes and the disappointments demand a separate chapter.

20. THE FIRST NIGHT

It was no easy thing to issue the first number of Indian Opinion from Phoenix. Had I not taken two precautions, the first issue would have had to be dropped or delayed. The idea of having an engine to work the press had not appealed to me. I had thought that hand-power would be more in keeping with an atmosphere where agricultural work was also to be done by hand. But as the idea had not appeared feasible, we had installed an oil-engine. I had, however, suggested to West to have something handy to fall back upon in case the engine failed. He had therefore arranged a wheel which could be worked by hand. The size of the paper, that of a daily, was considered reduced to foolscap size, so that, in case of emergency, copies might be struck off with the help of a treadle.

In the initial stages, we all had to keep late hours before the day of publication. Everyone, young and old, had to help in folding the sheets. We usually finished our work between ten o'clock and midnight. But the first night was unforgettable. We had got out an engineer from Durban to put up the engine and set it going. He and West tried their hardest, but in vain. Everyone was anxious. West, in despair, at last came to me, with tears in his eyes, and said, 'The engine will not work, I am afraid we cannot issue the paper in time.'

'If that is the case, we cannot help it. No use shedding tears. Let us do whatever else is humanly possible. What about the handwheel?' I said, comforting him.

‘Where have we the men to work?’ he replied. ‘We are not enough to cope with the job. It requires relays of four men each, and our own men are all tired.’

Building work had not yet been finished so the carpenters were still with us. They were sleeping on the press floor. I said pointed to them, ‘But can’t we make use of these carpenters? And we may have a whole night of work. I think this device is still open to us.’

‘I dare not wake up the carpenters. And our men are really too tired,’ said West.

‘Well, that’s for me to negotiate,’ said I.

‘Then it is possible that we may get through the work,’ West replied.

I woke up the carpenters and requested their co-operation. They needed no pressure. They said, ‘If we cannot be called upon in an emergency, what use are we? You rest yourselves and we will work the wheel. For us it is easy work.’ Our own men were of course ready.

West was greatly delighted and started singing a hymn as we set to work. I partnered the carpenters, all the rest joined turn by turn, and thus we went on until 7 a.m. There was still a good deal to do. I therefore suggested to West that the engineer might now be asked to get up and try again to start the engine, so that if we succeeded we might finish in time.

West woke him up, and he immediately went into the engine room. And lo and behold! the engine worked almost as soon as he touched it. The whole press rang with peals of joy. ‘How can this be? How is it that all our labours last night were of no avail, and this morning it has been set going as though there were nothing wrong with it?’ I enquired.

‘It is difficult to say,’ said West or the engineer, I forget which. ‘Machines also sometimes seem to behave as though they required rest like us.’

For me the failure of the engine had come as a test for us all, and its working in the nick of time as the fruit of our honest and earnest labours.

The copies were despatched in time, and everyone was happy.

This initial insistence ensured the regularity of the paper, and created an atmosphere of self-reliance in Phoenix. There came a time we deliberately gave up the use of the engine and worked with hand-power only. Those were, to my mind, the days of the highest moral uplift for Phoenix.

21. POLAK TAKES THE PLUNGE

It has always been my regret that, although I started the Settlement at Phoenix, I could stay there only for brief periods. My original idea had

been gradually to retire from practice, go and live at the Settlement, earn my livelihood by manual work there, and find the joy of service in the fulfilment of Phoenix. But it was not to be. I have found by experience that man makes his plans to be often upset by God, but, at the same time where the ultimate goal is the search of truth, no matter how a man's plans are frustrated, the issue is never injurious and often better than anticipated. The unexpected turn that Phoenix took and the unexpected happenings were certainly not injurious, though it is difficult to say that they were better than our original expectations.

In order to enable every one of us to make a living by manual labour, we parcelled out the land round the press in pieces of three acres each. One of these fell to my lot. On all these plots we, much against our wish, built houses with corrugated iron. Our desire had been to have mud huts thatched with straw or small brick houses such as would become ordinary peasants, but it could not be. They would have been more expensive and would have meant more time, and everyone was eager to settle down as soon as possible.

The editor was still Mansukhlal Naazar. He had not accepted the new scheme and was directing the paper from Durban where there was a branch office for *Indian Opinion* though we had paid compositors, the idea was for every member of the Settlement to learn type-setting, the easiest, if the most tedious, of the processes in a printing press. Those, therefore, who did not already know the work learnt it. I remained a dunce to the last. Maganlal Gandhi surpassed us all. Though he had never before worked in a press, he became an expert compositor and not only achieved great speed but, to my agreeable surprise, quickly mastered all the other branches of press work. I have always thought that he was not conscious of his own capacity.

We had hardly settled down, the buildings were hardly ready, when I had to leave the newly constructed nest and go to Johannesburg. I was not in a position to allow the work there to remain without attention for any length of time.

On return to Johannesburg, I informed Polak of the important changes I had made. His joy knew no bounds when he learnt that the loan of his book had been so fruitful. 'Is it not possible,' he asked, 'for me to take part in the new venture?' 'Certainly,' said I. 'You may if you like join the Settlement.' 'I am quite ready,' he replied, 'If you will admit me.'

His determination captured me. He gave a month's notice to his chief to be relieved from *The Critic*, and reached Phoenix in due course. By his sociability he won the hearts of all and soon became a member of the

family. Simplicity was so much a part of his nature that, far from feeling the life at Phoenix in any way strange or hard, he took to it like a duck takes to water. But I could not keep him there long. Mr. Ritch had decided to finish his legal studies in England, and it was impossible for me to bear the burden of the office single-handed, so I suggested to Polak that he should join the office and qualify as an attorney. I had thought that ultimately both of us would retire and settle at Phoenix, but that never came to pass. Polak's was such a trustful nature that, when he reposed his confidence in a friend, he would try to agree with him instead of arguing with him. He wrote to me from Phoenix that though he loved the life there, was perfectly happy, and had hopes of developing the Settlement, still he was ready to leave and join the office to qualify as an attorney, if I thought that thereby we should more quickly realize our ideals. I heartily welcomed the letter. Polak left Phoenix, came to Johannesburg and signed his articles with me.

About the same time a Scotch theosophist, whom I had been coaching for a local legal examination, also joined as an articled clerk, on my inviting him to follow Polak's example. His name was Mr. MacIntyre.

Thus, with the laudable object of quickly realizing the ideals at Phoenix, I seemed to be going deeper and deeper into a contrary current, and had God not willed otherwise, I should have found myself entrapped in this net spread in the name of simple life.

It will be after a few more chapters that I shall describe how I and my ideals were saved in a way no one had imagined or expected.

22. WHOM GOD PROTECTS

I had now given up all hope of returning to India in the near future. I had promised my wife that I would return home within a year. The year was gone without any prospect of my return, so I decided to send for her and the children.

On the boat bringing them to South Africa, Ramdas, my third son, broke his arm while playing with the ship's captain. The captain looked after him well and had him attended to by the ship's doctor. Ramdas landed with his hand in a sling. The doctor had advised that, as soon as we reached home, the wound should be dressed by a qualified doctor. But this was the time when I was full of faith in my experiments in earth treatment. I had even succeeded in persuading some of my clients who had faith in my quackery to try the earth and water treatment.

What then was I to do for Ramdas? He was just eight years old. I asked him if he would mind my dressing his wound. With a smile he said he did not mind at all. It was not possible for him at that age to decide what was the best thing for him, but he knew very well the distinction between quackery and proper medical treatment. And he knew my habit of home treatment and had faith enough to trust himself to me. In fear and trembling I undid the bandage, washed the wound, applied a clean earth poultice and tied the arm up again. This sort of dressing went on daily for about a month until the wound was completely healed. There was no hitch, and the wound took no more time to heal than the ship's doctor had said it would under the usual treatment.

This and other experiments enhanced my faith in such household remedies, and I now proceeded with them with more self-confidence. I widened the sphere of their application, trying the earth and water and fasting treatment in cases of wounds, fevers, dyspepsia, jaundice and other complaints, with success on most occasions. But nowadays I have not the confidence I had in South Africa and experience has even shown that these experiments involve obvious risks.

The reference here, therefore, to these experiments is not meant to demonstrate their success. I cannot claim complete success for any experiment. Even medical men can make no such claim for their experiments. My object is only to show that he who would go in for novel experiments must begin with himself. That leads to a quicker discovery of truth, and God always protects the honest experimenter.

The risks involved in experiments in cultivating intimate contacts with Europeans were as grave as those in the nature cure experiments. Only those risks were of a different kind. But in cultivating those contacts I never so much as thought of the risks.

I invited Polak to come and stay with me, and we began to live like blood brothers. The lady who was soon to be Mrs. Polak and he had been engaged for some years, but the marriage had been postponed for a propitious time. I have an impression that Polak wanted to put some money by before he settled down to a married life. He knew Ruskin much better than I, but his Western surroundings were a bar against his translating Ruskin's teaching immediately into practice. But I pleaded with him: 'When there is a heart union, as in your case, it is hardly right to postpone marriage merely for financial considerations. If poverty is a bar, poor men can never marry. And then you are now staying with me. There is no question of household expenses. I think you should get married as soon as possible. As I have said in a previous chapter, I had never to argue a

thing twice with Polak. He appreciated the force of my argument, and immediately opened correspondence on the subject with Mrs. Polak, who was then in England. She gladly accepted the proposal and in a few months reached Johannesburg. Any expense over the wedding was out of the question, not even a special dress was thought necessary. They needed no religious rites to seal the bond. Mrs. Polak was a Christian by birth and Polak a Jew. Their common religion was the religion of ethics.

I may mention in passing an amusing incident in connection with this wedding. The Registrar of European marriages in the Transvaal could not register between black or coloured people. In the wedding in question, I acted as the best man. Not that we could not have got a European friend for the purpose, but Polak would not brook the suggestion. So we three went to the Registrar of marriages. How could he be sure that the parties to a marriage in which I acted as the best man would be whites? He proposed to postpone registration pending inquiries. The next day was a Sunday. The day following was New Year's Day, a public holiday. To postpone the date of a solemnly arranged wedding on such a flimsy pretext was more than one could put up with. I knew the Chief Magistrate, who was head of the Registration Department. So I appeared before him with the couple. He laughed and gave me a note to the Registrar and the marriage was duly registered.

Up to now the Europeans living with us had been more or less known to me before. But now an English lady who was an utter stranger to us entered the family. I do not remember our ever having had a difference with the newly married couple, but even if Mrs. Polak and my wife had some unpleasant experience, they would have been no more than what happen in the best-regulated homogeneous families. And let it be remembered that mine would be considered an essentially heterogeneous family, where people of all kinds and temperaments were freely admitted. When we come to think of it, the distinction between heterogeneous and homogeneous is discovered to be merely imaginary. We are all one family.

I had better celebrate West's wedding also in this chapter. At this stage of my life, my ideas about *brahmacharya* had not fully matured, and so I was interesting myself in getting all my bachelor friends married. When, in due course, West made a pilgrimage to Louth to see his parents, I advised him to return married if possible. Phoenix was the common home, and as we were all supposed to have become farmers, we were not afraid of marriage and its usual consequences. West returned with Mrs. West, a beautiful young lady from Leicester. She came of a family of shoemakers working in a Leicester factory. I have called her beautiful,

because it was her moral beauty that at once attracted me. True beauty after all consists in purity of heart. With Mr. West had come his mother-in-law too. The old lady is still alive. She put us all to shame by her industry and her buoyant, cheerful nature.

In the same way as I persuaded these European friends to marry, I encouraged the Indian friends to send for their families from home. Phoenix thus developed into a little village, half a dozen families having come and settled and begun to increase there.

23. A PEEP INTO THE HOUSEHOLD

It has already been seen that, though household expenses were heavy, the tendency towards simplicity began in Durban. But the Johannesburg house came in for much severer overhauling in the light of Ruskin's teaching.

I introduced as much simplicity as was possible in a barrister's house. It was impossible to do without a certain amount of furniture. The change was more internal than external. The liking for doing personally all the physical labour increased. I therefore began to bring my children also under that discipline.

Instead of buying baker's bread, we began to prepare unleavened wholemeal bread at home according to Kuhne's recipe. Common mill flour was no good for this, and the use of handground flour, it was thought, would ensure more simplicity, health and economy. So I purchased a hand-mill for £ 7. The iron wheel was too heavy to be tacked by one man, but easy for two. Polak and I and the children usually worked it. My wife also occasionally lent a hand, though the grinding hour was her usual time for commencing kitchen work. Mrs. Polak now joined us on her arrival. The grinding proved a very beneficial exercise for the children. Neither this nor any other work was ever imposed on them, but it was a pastime to them to come and lend a hand, and they were at liberty to break off whenever tired. But the children, including those whom I shall have occasion to introduce later, as a rule never failed me. Not that I had no laggards at all, but most did their work cheerfully enough. I can recall few youngsters in those days fighting shy of work or pleading fatigue.

We had engaged a servant to look after the house. He lived with us as a member of the family, and the children used to help him in his work. The municipal sweeper removed the night-soil, but we personally attended to the cleaning of the closet instead of asking or expecting the servant to

do it. This proved a good training for the children. The result was that none of my sons developed any aversion for scavenger's work, and they naturally got a good grounding in general sanitation. There was hardly any illness in the home at Johannesburg, but whenever there was any, the nursing was willingly done by the children. I will not say that I was indifferent to their literary education, but I certainly did not hesitate to sacrifice it. My sons have therefore some reason for a grievance against me. Indeed they have occasionally given expression to it, and I must plead guilty to a certain extent. The desire to give them a literary education was there. I even endeavoured to give it to them myself, but every now and then there was some hitch or other. As I had made no other arrangement for their private tuition, I used to get them to walk with me daily to the office and back home a distance of about 5 miles in all. This gave them and me a fair amount of exercise. I tried to instruct them by conversation during these walks, if there was no one else claiming my attention. All my children, excepting the eldest, Harilal, who had stayed away in India, were brought up in Johannesburg in this manner. Had I been able to devote at least an hour to their literary education with strict regularity, I should have given them, in my opinion, an ideal education. But it was been their, as also my, regret that I failed to ensure them enough literary training. The eldest son has often given vent to his distress privately before me and publicly in the press; the other sons have generously forgiven the failure as unavoidable. I am not heart broken over it and the regret, if any, is that I did not prove an ideal father. But I hold that I sacrificed their literary training to what I genuinely, though may be wrongly, believed to be service to the community. I am quite clear that I have not been negligent in doing whatever was needful for building up their character. I believe it is the bounden duty of every parent to provide for this properly. Whenever, in spite of my endeavour, my sons have been found wanting, it is my certain conviction that they have reflected, not want of care on my part, but the defects of both their parents.

Children inherit the qualities of the parents, no less than their physical features. Environment does play an important part, but the original capital on which a child starts in life is inherited from its ancestors. I have also seen children successfully surmounting the effects of an evil inheritance. That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul.

Polak and I had often very heated discussions about the desirability or otherwise of giving the children an English education. It has always been my conviction that Indian parents who train their children to think and talk in English from their infancy betray their children and their

country. They deprive them of the spiritual and social heritage of the nation, and render them to that extent unfit for the service of the country. Having these convictions, I made a point of always talking to my children in Gujarati. Polak never liked this. He thought I was spoiling their future. He

contended, with all the vigour and love at his command, that, if children were to learn a universal language like English from their infancy, they would easily gain considerable advantage over others in the race of life. He failed to convince me. I do not now remember whether I convinced him of the correctness of my attitude, or whether he gave me up as too obstinate. This happened about twenty years ago, and my convictions have only deepened with experience. Though my sons have suffered for want of full literary education, the knowledge of the mother-tongue that they naturally acquired has been all to their and the country's good, inasmuch as they do not appear the foreigners they would otherwise have appeared. They naturally become bilingual, speaking and writing English with fair ease, because of daily contact with a large circle of English friends, and because of their stay in a country where English was the chief language spoken.

24. THE ZULU 'REBELLION'

Even after I thought I had settled down in Johannesburg, there was to be no settled life for me. Just when I felt that I should be breathing in peace, an unexpected event happened. The papers brought the news of the outbreak of the Zulu 'rebellion' in Natal. I bore no grudge against the Zulus, they had harmed no Indian. I had doubts about the 'rebellion' itself. But I then believed that the British Empire existed for the welfare of the world. A genuine sense of loyalty prevented me from even wishing ill to the Empire. The rightness or otherwise of the 'rebellion' was therefore not likely to affect my decision. Natal had a Volunteer Defence Force, and it was open to it to recruit more men. I read that this force had already been mobilized to quell the 'rebellion'.

I considered myself a citizen of Natal, being intimately connected with it. So I wrote to the Governor, expressing my readiness, if necessary, to form an Indian Ambulance Corps. He replied immediately accepting the offer.

I had not expected such prompt acceptance. Fortunately I had made all the necessary arrangements even before writing the letter. If my offer was accepted, I had decided to break up the Johannesburg home. Polak

was to have a smaller house, and my wife was to go and settle at Phoenix. I had her full consent to this decision. I do not remember her having ever stood in my way in matters like this. As soon, therefore, as I got the reply from the Governor, I gave the landlord the usual month's notice of vacating the house, sent some of the things to Phoenix and left some with Polak.

I went to Durban and appealed for men. A big contingent was not necessary. We were a party of twenty-four, of whom, besides me, four were Gujaratis. The rest were ex-indentured men from South India, excepting one who was a free Pathan.

In order to give me a status and to facilitate work, as also in accordance with the existing convention, the Chief Medical Officer appointed me to the temporary rank of Sergeant Major and three men selected by me to the rank of sergeants and one to that of corporal. We also received our uniforms from the Government. Our Corps was on active service for nearly six weeks. On reaching the scene of the 'rebellion', I saw that there was nothing there to justify the name of 'rebellion'. There was no resistance that one could see. The reason why the disturbance had been magnified into a rebellion was that a Zulu chief had advised non-payment of a new tax imposed on his people, and had assagaied a sergeant who had gone to collect the tax. At any rate my heart was with the Zulus, and I was delighted, on reaching headquarters, to hear that our main work was to be the nursing of the wounded Zulus. The Medical Officer in charge welcomed us. He said the white people were not willing nurses for the wounded Zulus, that their wounds were festering, and that he was at his wits' end. He hailed our arrival as a godsend for those innocent people, and he equipped us with bandages, disinfectants, etc., and took us to the improvised hospital. The Zulus were delighted to see us. The white soldiers used to peep through the railing that separated us from them and tried to dissuade us from attending to the wounds. And as we would not heed them, they became enraged and poured unspeakable abuse on the Zulus.

Gradually I came into closer touch with these soldiers, and they ceased to interfere. Among the commanding officers were Col. Sparks and Col. Wylie, who had bitterly opposed me in 1896. They were surprised at my attitude and specially called and thanked me. They introduced me to General Mackenzie. Let not the reader think that these were professional soldiers. Col. Wylie was a well-known Durban lawyer. Col. Sparks was well known as the owner of a butcher's shop in Durban. General Mackenzie was a noted Natal farmer. All these gentlemen were volunteers, and as such had received military training and experience.

The wounded in our charge were not wounded in battle. A section of them had been taken prisoners as suspects. The General had sentenced them to be flogged. The flogging had caused severe sores. These, being unattended to, were festering. The others were Zulu friendlies. Although these had badges given them to distinguish them from the 'enemy', they had been shot at by the soldiers by mistake.

Besides this work I had to compound and dispense prescriptions for the white soldiers. This was easy enough for me as I had received a year's training in Dr. Booth's little hospital. This work brought me in close contact with many Europeans.

We were attached to a swift-moving column. It had orders to march wherever danger was reported. It was for the most part mounted infantry. As soon as our camp was moved, we had to follow on foot with our stretchers on our shoulders. Twice or thrice we had to march forty miles a day. But wherever we went, I am thankful that we had God's good work to do, having to carry to the camp on our stretchers those Zulu friendlies who had been inadvertently wounded, and to attend upon them as nurses.

25. HEART SEARCHINGS

The Zulu 'rebellion' was full of new experiences and gave me much food for thought. The Boer War had not brought home to me the horrors of war with anything like the vividness that the 'rebellion' did. This was no war but a man-hunt, not only in my opinion, but also in that of many Englishmen with whom I had occasion to talk. To hear every morning reports of the soldiers' rifles exploding like crackers in innocent hamlets, and to live in the midst of them was a trial. But I swallowed the bitter draught, especially as the work of my Corps consisted only in nursing the wounded Zulus. I could see that but for us the Zulus would have been uncared for. This work, therefore, eased my conscience.

But there was much else to set one thinking. It was a sparsely populated part of the country. Few and far between in hills and dales were the scattered Kraals of the simple and so-called 'uncivilized' Zulus. Marching, with or without the wounded, through these solemn solitudes, I often fell into deep thought.

I pondered over brahmacharya and its implications, and my convictions took deep root. I discussed it with my co-workers. I had not realized then how indispensable it was for self-realization. But I clearly saw that one aspiring to serve humanity with his whole soul could not do without it. It was borne in upon me that I should have more and more

occasions for service of the kind I was rendering, and that I should find myself unequal to my task if I were engaged in the pleasures of family life and in the propagation and rearing of children.

In a word, I could not live both after the flesh and the spirit. On the present occasion, for instance, I should not have been able to throw myself into the fray, had my wife been expecting a baby. Without the observance of *brahmacharya* service of the family would be inconsistent with service of the community. With *brahmacharya* they would be perfectly consistent.

So thinking, I became somewhat impatient to take a final vow. The prospect of the vow brought a certain kind of exultation. Imagination also found free play and opened out limitless vistas of service.

Whilst I was thus in the midst of strenuous physical and mental work, a report came to the effect that the work of suppressing the 'rebellion' was nearly over, and that we should soon be discharged. A day or two after this our discharge came and in a few days we got back to our homes.

After a short while I got a letter from the Governor specially thanking the Ambulance Corps for its services.

On my arrival at Phoenix I eagerly broached the subject of *Brahmacharya* with Chhaganlal, Maganlal, West and others. They liked the idea and accepted the necessity of taking the vow, but they also represented the difficulties of the task. Some of them set themselves bravely to observe it, and some, I know, succeeded also.

I too took the plunge the vow to observe *brahmacharya* for life. I must confess that I had not then fully realized the magnitude and immensity of the task I undertook. The difficulties are even today staring me in the face. The importance of the vow is being more and more borne in upon me. Life without *brahmacharya* appears to me to be insipid and animal-like. The brute by nature knows no self-restraint. Man is man because he is capable of, and only in so far as he exercises, self-restraint. What formerly appeared to me to be extravagant praise of *brahmacharya* in our religious books seems now, with increasing clearness every day, to be absolutely proper and founded on experience.

I saw that *brahmacharya*, which is so full of wonderful potency, is by no means an easy affair, and certainly not a mere matter of the body. It begins with bodily restraint, but does not end there. The perfection of it precludes even an impure thought. A true *brahmachari* will not even dream of satisfying the fleshly appetite, and until he is in that condition, he has a great deal of ground to cover.

For me the observance of even bodily *brahmacharya* has been full of difficulties. Today I may say that I feel myself fairly safe, but I had yet

to achieve complete mastery over thought, which is so essential. Not that the will or effort is lacking, but it is yet a problem to me wherefrom undersirable thoughts spring their insidious invasions. I have no doubt that there is a key to lock out undersirable thoughts, but every one has to find it out for himself. Saints and seers have left their experiences for us, but they have given us no infallible and universal prescription. For perfection or freedom from error comes only from grace, and so seekers after God have left us mantras, such as *Ramanama*, hallowed by their own austerities and charged with their purity. Without an unreserved surrender to His grace, complete mastery over thought is impossible. This is the teaching of every great book of religion, and I am realizing the truth of it every moment of my striving after that perfect brahmacharya.

But part of the history of that striving and struggle will be told in chapters to follow. I shall conclude this chapter with an indication of how I set about the task. In the first flush of enthusiasm, I found the observance quite easy. The very first change I made in my mode of life was to stop sparing the same bed with my wife or seeking privacy with her.

Thus brahmacharya which I had been observing willynilly since 1900, was sealed with a vow in the middle of 1906.

26. THE BIRTH OF SATYAGRAHA

Events were so shaping themselves in Johannesburg as to make this self-purification on my part a preliminary as it were to Satyagraha. I can now see that all the principal events of my life, culminating in the vow of brahmacharya, were secretly preparing me for it. The principle called Satyagraha came into being before that name was invented. Indeed when it was born, I myself could not say what it was. In Gujarati also we used the English phrase 'passive resistance' to describe it. When in a meeting of Europeans I found that the term 'passive resistance' was too narrowly construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence, I had to demur to all these statements and explain the real nature of the Indian movement. It was clear that a new word must be coined by the Indians to designate their struggle.

But I could not for the life of me find out a new name, and therefore offered a nominal prize through Indian Opinion to the reader who made the best suggestion on the subject. As a result Maganlal Gandhi coined the word 'Sadagraha' (Sat:truth, Agraha:firmness) and won the prize. But

in order to make it clearer I changed the word to 'Satyagraha' which has since become current in Gujarati as a designation for the struggle.

The history of this struggle is for all practical purposes a history of the remainder of my life in South Africa and especially of my experiments with truth in that sub-continent. I wrote the major portion of this history in Yeravda jail and finished it after I was released. It was published in Navajivan and subsequently issued in book form. Sjt. Valji Govindji Desai has been translating it into English for Current Thought, but I am now arranging to have the English translation published in book form at an early date, so that those who will may be able to familiarize themselves with my most important experiments in South Africa. I would recommend a perusal of my history of Satyagraha in South Africa to such readers as have not seen it already. I will not repeat what I have put down there, but in the next few chapters will deal only with a few personal incidents of my life in South Africa which have not been covered by that history. And when I have done with these, I will at once proceed to give the reader some idea of my experiments in India. Therefore, anyone who wishes to consider these experiments in their strict chronological order will now do well to keep the history of Satyagraha in South Africa before him.

27. MORE EXPERIMENTS IN DIETETICS

I was anxious to observe brahmacharya in thought, word and deed, and equally anxious to devote the maximum of time to the Satyagraha struggle and fit myself for it by cultivating purity. I was therefore led to make further changes and to impose greater restraints upon myself in the matter of food. The motive for the previous changes had been largely hygienic, but the new experiments were made from a religious standpoint.

Fasting and restriction in diet now played a more important part in my life. Passion in man is generally co-existent with a hankering after the pleasures of the palate. And so it was with me. I have encountered many difficulties in trying to control passion as well as taste, and I cannot claim even now to have brought them under complete subjection. I have considered myself to be a heavy eater. What friends have thought to be my restraint has never appeared to me in that light. If I had failed to develop restraint to the extent that I have, I should have descended lower than the beasts and met my doom long ago. However, as I had adequately realized my shortcomings, I made great efforts to get rid of them, and thanks to this endeavour I have all these years pulled on with my body and put in with it my share of work.

Being conscious of my weakness and unexpectedly coming in contact with congenial company, I began to take an exclusive fruit diet or to fast on the Ekadashi day, and also to observe Janmashtami and similar holidays.

I began with a fruit diet, but from the standpoint of restraint I did not find much to choose between a fruit diet and a diet of food grains. I observed that the same indulgence of taste was possible with the former as with the latter, and even more, when one got accustomed to it. I therefore came to attach greater importance to fasting or having only one meal a day on holidays. And if there was some occasion for penance or the like, I gladly utilized it too for the purpose of fasting.

But I also saw that, the body now being drained more effectively, the food yielded greater relish and the appetite grew keener. It dawned upon me that fasting could be made as powerful a weapon of indulgence as of restraint. Many similar later experiences of mine as well as of others can be adduced as evidence of this startling fact. I wanted to improve and train my body, but as my chief object now was to achieve restraint and a conquest of the palate, I selected first one food and then another, and at the same time restricted the amount. But the relish was after me, as it were. As I gave up one thing and took up another, this latter afforded me a fresher and greater relish than its predecessor.

In making these experiments I had several companions, the chief of whom was Hermann Kallenbach. I have already written about this friend in the history of Satyagraha in South Africa, and will not go over the same ground here. Mr. Kallenbach was always with me whether in fasting or in dietetic changes. I lived with him at his own place when the Satyagraha struggle was at its height. We discussed our changes in food and derived more pleasure from the new diet than from the old. Talk of this nature sounded quite pleasant in those days, and did not strike me as at all improper. Experience has taught me, however, that it was wrong to have dwelt upon the relish of food. One should eat not in order to please the palate, but just to keep the body going. When each organ of sense subserves the body and through the body the soul. Its special relish disappears, and then alone does it begin to function in the way nature intended it to do.

Any number of experiments is too small and no sacrifice is too great for attaining this symphony with nature. But unfortunately the current is now-a-days flowing strongly in the opposite direction. We are not ashamed to sacrifice a multitude of other lives in decorating the perishable body and trying to prolong its existence for a few fleeting moments, with the

result that we kill ourselves, both body and soul. In trying to cure one old disease. We give rise to a hundred new ones: in trying to enjoy the pleasures of sense, we lose in the end even our capacity for enjoyment. All this is passing before our very eyes, but there are none so blind as those who will not see.

Having thus set forth their object and the train of ideas which led up to them, I now propose to describe the dietetic experiments at some length.

28. KASTURBAI'S COURAGE

Thrice in her life my wife narrowly escaped death through serious illness. The cures were due to household remedies. At the time of her first attack Satyagraha was going on or was about to commence. She had frequent haemorrhage. A medical friend advised a surgical operation, to which she agreed after some hesitation. She was extremely emaciated, and the doctor had to perform the operation without chloroform. It was successful, but she had to suffer much pain, she, however, went through it with wonderful bravery. The doctor and his wife who nursed her were all attention. This was in Durban. The doctor gave me leave to go to Johannesburg, and told me not to have any anxiety about the patient.

In a few days, however, I received a letter to the effect that Kasturbai was worse, too weak to sit up in bed, and had once become unconscious. The doctor knew that he might not, without my consent, give her wines or meat. So he telephoned to me at Johannesburg for permission to give her beef tea. I replied saying I could not grant the permission, but that, if she was in a condition to express her wish in the matter she might be consulted and she was free to do as she liked. 'But,' said the doctor, 'I refuse to consult the patient's wishes in the matter. You must come yourself. If you do not leave me free to prescribe whatever diet I like, I will not hold myself responsible for your wife's life.'

I took the train for Durban the same day, and met the doctor who quietly broke this news to me: 'I had already given Mrs. Gandhi beef tea when I telephoned to you.'

'Now, doctor, I call this a fraud,' said I.

'No question of fraud in prescribing medicine or diet for a patient. In fact we doctors consider it a virtue to deceive patients or their relatives, if thereby we can save our patients,' said the doctor with determination.

I was deeply pained, but kept cool. The doctor was a good man and a personal friend. He and his wife had laid me under a debt of gratitude, but I was not prepared to put up with his medical morals.

‘Doctor, tell me what you propose to do now. I would never allow my wife to be given meat or beef, even if the denial meant her death, unless of course she desired to take it.’

‘You are welcome to your philosophy. I tell you that, so long as you keep your wife under my treatment, I must have the option to give her anything I wish. If you don’t like this, I must regretfully ask you to remove her. I can’t see her die under my roof.’

‘Do you mean to say that I must remove her at once?’

‘Whenever did I ask you to remove her? I only want to be left entirely free. If you do so, my wife and I will do all that is possible for her, and you may go back without the least anxiety on her score. But if you will not understand this simple thing, you will compel me to ask you to remove your wife from my place.’

I think one of my sons was with me. He entirely agreed with me, and said his mother should not be given beef tea. I next spoke to Kasturbai herself. She was really too weak to be consulted in this matter. But I thought it my painful duty to do so. I told her what had passed between the doctor and myself. She gave a resolute reply: ‘I will not take beef tea. It is a rare thing in this world to be born as a human being, and I would far rather die in your arms than pollute my body with such abominations.’

I pleaded with her. I told her that she was not bound to follow me. I cited to her the instances of Hindu friends and acquaintances who had no scruples about taking meat or wine as medicine. But she was adamant. ‘No,’ said she, ‘pray remove me at once.’

I was delighted. Not without some agitation I decided to take her away. I informed the doctor of her resolve. He exclaimed in a rage: ‘What a callous man you are! You should have been ashamed to broach the matter to her in her present condition. I tell you your wife is not least little hustling. I shouldn’t surprised if she were to die on the way. But if you must persist, you are free to do so. If you will not give her beef tea, I will not take the risk of keeping her under my roof even for a single day.’

So we decided to leave the place at once. It was drizzling and the station was some distance. We had to take the train from Durban for Phoenix, whence our Settlement was reached by a road of two miles and a half, I was undoubtedly taking a very great risk, but I trusted in God, and proceeded with my task. I sent a messenger to Phoenix in advance, with a message to West to receive us at the station with a hammock, a bottle of hot milk and one of hot water, and six men to carry kasturbai in the hammock. I got a rickshaw to enable me to take her by the next

available train, put her into it in that dangerous condition, and marched away.

Kasturbai needed no cheering up. On the contrary, she comforted me, saying: 'Nothing will happen to me. Don't worry.'

She was mere skin and bone, having had no nourishment for days. The station platform was very large, and as the rickshaw could not be taken inside, one had to walk some distance before one could reach the train. So I carried her in my arms and put her into the compartment. From Phoenix we carried her in the hammock, and there she slowly picked up strength under hydropathic treatment.

In two or three days of our arrival at Phoenix a Swami came to our place. He had heard of the resolute way in which we had rejected the doctor's advice, and he had, out of sympathy, come to plead with us. My second and third sons Manilal and Ramdas were, so far as I can recollect, present when the Swami came. He held forth on the religious harmlessness of taking meat, citing authorities from Manu. I did not like his carrying on this disputation in the presence of my wife, but I suffered him to do so out of courtesy. I knew the verses from the Manusmriti, I did not need them for my conviction. I knew also that there was a school which regarded these verses as interpolations: but even if they were not, I held my views on vegetarianism independently of religious texts, and Kasturbai's faith was unshakable. To her the scriptural texts were a sealed book, but the traditional religion of her forefathers was enough for her. The children swore by their father's creed and so they made light of the Swami's discourse. But Kasturbai put an end to the dialogue at once. 'Swamiji,' she said, 'Whatever you may say, I do not want to recover by means of beef tea. Pray don't worry me any more. You may discuss the thing with my husband and children if you like. But my mind is made up.'

29. DOMESTIC SATYAGRAHA

My first experience of jail life was in 1908. I saw that some of the regulations that the prisoners had to observe were such as should be voluntarily observed by a brahmachari, that is, one desiring to practise self-restraint. Such, for instance, was the regulation requiring the last meal to be finished before sunset. Neither the Indian nor the African prisoners were allowed tea or coffee. They could add salt to the cooked food if they wished, but they might not have anything for the mere satisfaction of the palate. When I asked the jail medical officer to give us curry powder, and to let us add salt to the food whilst it was cooking, he

said: 'You are not here for satisfying your palate. From the point of view of health, curry powder is not necessary, and it makes no difference whether you add salt during or after cooking.'

Ultimate these restrictions were modified, though not without much difficulty, but both were wholesome rules of self-restraint. Inhibitions imposed from without rarely succeed, but when they are self-imposed, they have a decidedly salutary effect. So, immediately after release from jail, I imposed on myself the two rules. As far as was then possible, I stopped taking tea, and finished my last meal before sunset. Both these now require no effort in the observance.

There came, however, an occasion which compelled me to give up salt altogether, and this restriction I continued for an unbroken period of ten years. I had read in some books on vegetarianism that salt was not a necessary article of diet for man, that on the contrary saltless diet was better for the health. I had deduced that a brahmachari benefited by a saltless diet, I had read and realized that the weak-bodied should avoid pulses. I was very fond of them.

Now it happened that Kasturbai, who had a brief respite after her operation, had again begun getting haemorrhage, and the malady seemed to be obstinate. Hydropathic treatment by itself did not answer. She had not much faith in my remedies, though she did not resist them. She certainly did not ask for outside help. So when all my remedies had failed. I entreated her to give up salt and pulses. She would not agree, however much I pleaded with her, supporting myself with authorities. At last she challenged me, saying that even I could not give up these articles if I was advised to do so, I was pained and equally delighted, delighted in that I got an opportunity to shower my love on her. I said to her: 'You are mistaken. If I was ailing and the doctor advised me to give up these or any other articles, I should unhesitatingly do so. But there! Without any medical advice, I give up salt and pulses for one year, whether you do so or not.'

She was rudely shocked and exclaimed in deep sorrow: 'Pray forgive me. Knowing you, I should not have provoked you. I promise to abstain from these things, but for heaven's sake take back your vow. This is too hard on me.'

'It is very good for you to forego these articles. I have not the slightest doubt that you will be all the better without them. As for me, I cannot retract a vow seriously taken. And it is sure to benefit me, for all restraint, whatever prompts it, is wholesome for men. You will therefore leave me

alone. It will be a test for me, and a moral support to you in carrying out your resolve.'

So she gave me up. 'You are too obstinate. You will listen to none,' she said, and sought relief in tears.

I would like to count this incident as an instance of Satyagraha, and it is one of the sweetest recollections of my life.

After this Kasturbai began to pick up quickly whether as a result of the saltless and pulseless diet or of the other consequent changes in her food, whether as a result of my strict vigilance in exacting observance of the other rules of life, or as an effect of the mental exhilaration produced by the incident, and if so to what extent, I cannot say. But she rallied quickly, haemorrhage completely stopped, and I added somewhat to my reputation as a quack.

As for me, I was all the better for the new denials. I never craved for the things I had left, the year sped away, and I found the senses to be more subdued than ever. The experiment stimulated the inclination for self-restraint, and I returned to India. Only once I happened to take both the articles whilst I was in London in 1914. But of that occasion, and as to how I resumed both, I shall speak in a later chapter.

I have tried the experiment of a saltless and pulseless diet on many of my co-workers, and with good results in South Africa. Medically there may be two opinions as to the value of this diet, but morally I have no doubt that all self-denial is good for the soul. The diet of a man of self-restraint must be different from that of a man of pleasure, just as their ways of life must be different. Aspirants after brahmacharya often defeat their own end by adopting courses suited to a life of pleasure.

30. TOWARDS SELF-RESTRAINT

I have described in the last chapter how Kasturbai's illness was instrumental in bringing about some changes in my diet. At a later stage more changes were introduced for the sake of supporting brahmacharya.

The first of these was the giving up of milk. It was from Raychandbhai that I first learnt that milk stimulated animal passion. Books on vegetarianism strengthened the idea, but so long as I had not taken the brahmacharya vow I could not make up my mind to forego milk. I had long realized that milk was not necessary for supporting the body, but it was not easy to give it up. While the necessity for avoiding milk in the interests of self-restraint was growing upon me, I happened to come across

some literature from Calcutta, describing the tortures to which cows and buffaloes were subjected by their keepers. This had a wonderful effect on me. I discussed it with Mr. Kallenbach.

Though I have introduced Mr. Kallenbach to the readers of the history of Satyagraha in South Africa, and referred to him in a previous chapter, I think it necessary to say something more about him here. We met quite by accident. He was a friend of Mr. Khan's, and as the latter had discovered deep down in him a vein of other-worldliness he introduced him to me.

When I came to know him I was startled at his love of luxury and extravagance. But at our very first meeting, he asked searching questions concerning matters of religion. We incidentally talked of Gautam Buddha's renunciation. Our acquaintance soon ripened into very close friendship, so much so that we thought alike, and he was convinced that he must carry out in his life the changes I was making in mine.

At that time he was single, and was expending Rs. 1,200 monthly on himself, over and above house rent. Now he reduced himself to such simplicity that his expenses came to Rs. 120 per month. After the breaking up of my household and my first release from jail, we began to live together. It was a fairly hard life that we led.

It was during this time that we had the discussion about milk. Mr. Kallenbach said, 'We constantly talk about the harmful effects of milk. Why then do not we give it up? It is certainly not necessary.' I was agreeably surprised at the suggestion, which I warmly welcomed, and both of us pledged ourselves to abjure milk there and then. This was at Tolstoy Farm in the year 1912.

But this denial was not enough to satisfy me. Soon after this I decided to live on a pure fruit diet, and that too composed of the cheapest fruit possible. Our ambition was to live the life of the poorest people.

The fruit diet turned out to be very convenient also. Cooking was practically done away with. Raw groundnuts, bananas, dates, lemons, and olive oil composed our usual diet.

I must here utter a warning for the aspirants of brahmacharya. Though I have made out an intimate connection between diet and brahmacharya, it is certain that mind is the principal thing. A mind consciously unclean cannot be cleansed by fasting. Modifications in diet have no effect on it. The concupiscence of the mind cannot be rooted out except by intense self-examination, surrender to God and lastly, grace. But there is an intimate connection between the mind and the body, and carnal mind always lusts for delicacies and luxuries. To obviate this tendency dietetic restrictions and fasting would appear to be necessary. The carnal mind,

instead of controlling the senses, becomes their slave, and therefore the body always needs clean non-stimulating foods and periodical fasting.

Those who make light of dietetic restrictions and fasting are as much in error as those who stake their all on them. My experience teaches me that, for those whose minds are working towards self-restraint, dietetic restrictions and fasting are very helpful. In fact without their help concupiscence cannot be completely rooted out the mind.

31. FASTING

Just about the time when I gave up milk and cereals, and started on the experiment of a fruit diet, I commenced fasting as a means of self-restraint. In this Mr. Kallenbach also joined me. I had been used to fasting now and again, but for purely health reasons. That fasting was necessary for self-restraint I learnt from a friend.

Having been born in a Vaishnava family and of a mother who was given to keeping all sorts of hard vows, I had observed, while in India, the Ekadashi and other fasts, but in doing so I had merely copied my mother and sought to please my parents.

At that time I did not understand, nor did I believe in, the efficacy of fasting. But seeing that the friend I have mentioned was observing it with benefit, and with the hope of supporting the brahmacharya vow, I followed his example and began keeping the Ekadashi fast. As a rule Hindus allow themselves milk and fruit on a fasting day, but such fast I had been keeping daily. So now I began complete fasting, allowing myself only water.

When I started on this experiment, the Hindu month of Shravan and the Islamic month of Ramzan happened to coincide. The Gandhis used to observe not only the Vaishnava but also the Shaivite vows, and visited the Shaivite as also the Vaishnava temples. Some of the members of the family used to observe pradosha in the whole of the month of Shravan. I decided to do likewise.

These important experiments were undertaken while we were at Tolstoy Farm, where Mr. Kallenbach and I were staying with a few Satyagrahi families, including young people and children. For these last we had a school. Among them were four or five Musalmans. I always helped and encouraged them in keeping all their religious observances. I took care to see that they offered their daily namaz. There were Christians and Parsi youngsters too, whom I considered it my duty to encourage to follow their respective religious observances.

During this month, therefore, I persuaded the Musalman youngsters to observe the ramzan fast. I had of course decided to observe pradosha myself, but I now asked the Hindu, Parsi and Christian youngsters to join me. I explained to them that it was always a good thing to join with others in any matter of self-denial. Many of the Farm inmates welcomed my proposal. The Hindu and the Parsi youngsters did not copy the Musalman ones in every details; it was not necessary. The Musalman youngsters had to wait for their breakfast until sunset, whereas the others did not do so, and were thus able to prepare delicacies for the Musalman friends and serve them. Nor had the Hindu and other youngsters to keep the Musalmans company when they had their last meal before sunrise next morning, and of course all except the Musalmans allowed themselves water.

The result of these experiments was that all were convinced of the value of fasting, and a splendid esprit de corps grew up among them.

We were all vegetarians on Tolstoy Farm, thanks, I must gratefully confess, to the readiness of all to respect my feelings. The Musalman youngsters must have missed their meat during ramzan, but none of them ever let me know that they did so. They delighted in and relished the vegetarian diet, and the Hindu youngsters often prepared vegetarian delicacies for them, in keeping with the simplicity of the Farm.

I have purposely digressed in the midst of this chapter on fasting, as I could not have given these pleasant reminiscences anywhere else, and I have indirectly described a characteristic of mine, namely that I have always loved to have my co-workers with me in anything that has appealed to me as being good. They were quite new to fasting, but thanks to the pradosha and ramzan fasts, it was easy for me to interest them in fasting as a means of self-restraint.

Thus an atmosphere of self-restraint naturally sprang up on the Farm. All the Farm inmates now began to join us in keeping partial and complete fasts, which, I am sure, was entirely to the good. I cannot definitely say how far this self-denial touched their hearts and helped them in their striving to conquer the flesh. For my part, however, I am convinced that I greatly benefited by it both physically and morally. But I know that it does not necessarily follow that fasting and similar disciplines would have the same effect for all.

Fasting can help to curb animal passion, only if it is undertaken with a view to self-restraint. Some of my friends have actually found their animal passion and palate stimulated as an after-effect of fasts. That is to say, fasting is futile unless it is accompanied by an incessant longing for

self-restraint. The famous verse from the second chapter of the Bhagavadgita is worth noting in this connection:

‘For a man who is fasting his senses Outwardly, the sense-objects disappear, Leaving the yearning behind; but when He has seen the Highest, Even the yearning disappears.’

Fasting and similar discipline is, therefore, one of the means to the end of self-restraint, but it is not all, and if physical fasting is not accompanied by mental fasting, it is bound to end in hypocrisy and disaster.

32. AS SCHOOLMASTER

The reader will, I hope, bear in mind the fact that I am, in these chapters, describing things not mentioned, or only cursorily mentioned, in the history of Satyagraha in South Africa. If he does so, he will easily see the connection between the recent chapters.

As the Farm grew, it was found necessary to make some provision for the education of its boys and girls. There were, among these, Hindu, Musalman, Parsi and Christian boys and some Hindu girls. It was not possible, and I did not think it necessary, to engage special teachers for them. It was not possible, for qualified Indian teachers were scarce, and even when available, none would be ready to go to a place 21 miles distant from Johannesburg on a small salary. Also we were certainly not overflowing with money. And I did not think it necessary to import teachers from outside the Farm. I did not believe in the existing system of education, and I had a mind to find out by experience and experiment the true system. Only this much I knew—that, under ideal conditions, true education could be imparted only by the parents, and that then there should be the minimum of outside help, that Tolstoy Farm was a family, in which I occupied the place of the father, and that I should so far as possible shoulder the responsibility for the training of the young.

The conception no doubt was not without its flaws. All the young people had not been with me since their childhood, they had been brought up in different conditions and environments, and they did not belong to the same religion. How could I do full justice to the young people, thus circumstanced, even if I assumed the place of paterfamilias?

But I had always given the first place to the culture of the heart or the building of character, and as I felt confident that moral training could be given to all alike, no matter how different their ages and their upbringing, I decided to live amongst them all the twenty-four hours of the day as their father. I regarded character building as the proper

foundation for their education and, if the foundation was firmly laid, I was sure that the children could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends.

But as I fully appreciated the necessity of a literary training in addition, I started some classes with the help of Mr. Kallenbach and Sjt. Pragji Desai. Nor did I underrate the building up of the body. This they got in the course of their daily routine. For there were no servants on the Farm, and all the work, from cooking down to scavenging, was done by the inmates. There were many fruit trees to be looked after, and enough gardening to be done as well. Mr. Kallenbach was fond of gardening and had gained some experience of this work in one of the Governmental model gardens. It was obligatory on all, young and old, who were not engaged in the kitchen, to give some time to gardening. The children had the lion's share of this work, which included digging pits, felling timber and lifting loads. This gave them ample exercise. They took delight in the work, and so they did not generally need any other exercise or games. Of course some of them, and sometimes all them, malingered and shirked. Sometimes I connived at their pranks, but often I was strict with them, I dare say they did not like the strictness, but I do not recollect their having resisted it. Whenever I was strict, I would, by argument, convince them that it was not right to play with one's work. The conviction would, however, be short-lived, the next moment they would again leave their work and go to play. All the same we got along, and at any rate they built up fine physiques. There was scarcely any illness on the Farm, though it must be said that good air and water and regular hours of food were not a little responsible for this.

A word about vocational training. It was my intention to teach every one of the youngsters some useful manual vocation. For this purpose Mr. Kallenbach went to a Trappist monastery and returned having learnt shoemaking. I learnt it from him and taught the art to such as were ready to take it up. Mr. Kallenbach had some experience of carpentry, and there was another inmate who knew it; so we had a small class in carpentry. Cooking almost all the youngsters knew.

All this was new to them. They had never even dreamt that they would have to learn these things some day. For generally the only training that Indian children received in South Africa was in the three R's.

On Tolstoy Farm we made it a rule that the youngsters should not be asked to do what the teachers did not do, and therefore, when they were asked to do any work, there was always a teacher co-operating and actually

working with them. Hence whatever the youngsters learnt, they learnt cheerfully.

Literary training and character building must be dealt with in the following chapters.

33. LITERARY TRAINING

It was seen in the last chapter how we provided for the physical training on Tolstoy Farm, and incidentally for the vocational. Though this was hardly done in a way to satisfy me, it may be claimed to have been more or less successful.

Literary training, however, was a more difficult matter. I had neither the resources nor the literary equipment necessary; and I had not the time I would have wished to devote to the subject. The physical work that I was doing used to leave me thoroughly exhausted at the end of the day, and I used to have the classes just when I was most in need of some rest. Instead, therefore, of my being fresh for the class, I could with the greatest difficulty keep myself awake. The mornings had to be devoted to work on the farm and domestic duties, so the school hours had to be kept after the midday meal. There was no other time suitable for the school.

We gave three periods at the most to literary training. Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati and Urdu were all taught, and tuition was given through the vernaculars of the boys. English was taught as well, it was also necessary to acquaint the Gujarati Hindu children with a little Sanskrit, and to teach all the children elementary history, geography and arithmetic.

I had undertaken to teach Tamil and Urdu. The little Tamil I knew was acquired during voyages and in jail. I had not got beyond Pope's excellent Tamil handbook. My knowledge of the Urdu script was all that I had acquired on a single voyage, and my knowledge of the language was confined to the familiar Persian and Arabic words that I had learnt from contact with Musalman friends. Of Sanskrit I knew no more than I had learnt at the high school, even my Gujarati was no better than that which one acquires at the school.

Such was the capital with which I had to carry on. In poverty of literary equipment my colleagues went one better than I. But my love for the languages of my country, my confidence in my pupils, and more than that, their generosity, stood me in good stead.

The Tamil boys were all born in South Africa, and therefore knew very little Tamil, and did not know the script at all. So I had to teach them the script and the rudiments of grammar. That was easy enough. My pupils

knew that they could any day beat me in Tamil conversation, and when Tamilians, not knowing English, came to see me, they became my interpreters. I got along merrily, because I never attempted to disguise my ignorance from my pupils. In all respects I showed myself to them exactly as I really was. Therefore in spite of my colossal ignorance of the language I never lost their love and respect. It was comparatively easier to teach the Musalman boys Urdu. They knew the script. I had simply to stimulate in them an interest in reading and to improve their handwriting.

These youngsters were for the most part unlettered and unschooled. But I found in the course of my work that I had very little to teach them, beyond weaning them from their laziness, and supervising their studies. As I was content with this, I could pull on with boys of different ages and learning different subjects in one and the same class room.

Of text-books, about which we hear so much, I never felt the want. I do not even remember having made much use of the books that were available. I did not find it at all necessary to load the boys with quantities of books. I have always felt that the true text-book for the pupil is his teacher. I remember very little that my teachers taught me from books, but I have even now a clear recollection of the things they taught me independently of books.

Children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes. I do not remember having read any book from cover to cover with my boys. But I gave them, in my own language, all that I had digested from my reading of various books, and I dare say they are still carrying a recollection of it in their minds. It was laborious for them to remember what they learnt from books, but what I imparted to them by word of mouth, they could repeat with the greatest ease. Reading was a task for them, but listening to me was a pleasure, when I did not bore them by failure to make my subject interesting. And from the questions that my talks prompted them to put, I had a measure of their power of understanding.

34. TRAINING OF THE SPIRIT

The spiritual training of the boys was a much more difficult matter than their physical and mental training. I relied little on religious books for the training of the spirit. Of course, I believed that every student should be acquainted with the elements of his own religion and have a general knowledge of his own scriptures, and therefore I provided for such knowledge as best I could. But that, to my mind, was part of the

intellectual training. Long before I undertook the education of the youngsters of the Tolstoy Farm I had realized that the training of the spirit was a thing by itself. To develop the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards a knowledge of God and self-realization. And I held that this was an essential part of the training of the young, and that all training without culture of the spirit was of no use, and might be even harmful.

I am familiar with the superstition that self-realization is possible only in the fourth stage of life, i.e., sanyasa (renunciation). But it is a matter of common knowledge that those who defer preparation for this invaluable experience until the last stage of life attain not self-realization but old age amounting to a second and pitiable childhood, living as a burden on this earth. I have a full recollection that I held these views even whilst I was teaching i. e., in 1911-12, though I might not then have expressed them in identical language.

How then was this spiritual training to be given? I made the children memorize and recite hymns, and read to them from books on moral training. But that was far from satisfying me. As I came into closer contact with them I saw that it was not through books that one could impart training of the spirit. Just as physical training was to be imparted through physical exercise even so the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit. And the exercise of the spirit entirely depended on the life and character of the teacher. The teacher had always to be mindful of his p's and q's, whether he was in the midst of his boys or not.

It is possible for a teacher situated miles away to affect the spirit of the pupils by his way of living. It would be idle for me, if I were a liar, to teach boys to tell the truth. A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant, and a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint. I saw therefore that I must be an eternal object-lesson to the boys and girls living with me. They thus became my teachers, and I learnt I must be good and live straight, if only for their sakes. I may say that the increasing discipline and restraint I imposed on myself at Tolstoy Farm was mostly due to those wards of mine.

One of them was wild, unruly, given to lying, and quarrelsome. On one occasion he broke out most violently. I was exasperated. I never punished my boys, but this time I was very angry. I tried to reason with him. But he was adamant and even tried to overreach me. At last I picked up a ruler lying at hand and delivered a blow on his arm. I trembled as I struck him. I dare say he noticed it. This was an entirely novel experience

for them all. The boy cried out and begged to be forgiven. He cried not because the beating was painful to him; he could, if he had been so minded, have paid me back in the same coin, being a stoutly built youth of seventeen; but he realized my pain in being driven to this violent resource. Never again after this incident did he disobey me. But I still repent that violence. I am afraid I exhibited before him that day not the spirit, but the brute, in me.

I have always been opposed to corporal punishment. I remember only one occasion on which I physically punished one of my sons. I have therefore never until this day been able to decide whether I was right or wrong in using the ruler. Probably it was improper, for it was prompted by anger and a desire to punish. Had it been an expression only of my distress, I should have considered it justified. But the motive in this case was mixed.

This incident set me thinking and taught me a better method of correcting students. I do not know whether that method would have availed on the occasion in question. The youngster soon forgot the incident, and I do not think he ever showed great improvement. But the incident made me understand better the duty of a teacher towards his pupils.

Cases of misconduct on the part of the boys often occurred after this, but I never resorted to corporal punishment. Thus in my endeavour to impart spiritual training to the boys and girls under me, I came to understand better and better the power of the spirit.

35. TARES AMONG THE WHEAT

It was at Tolstoy Farm that Mr. Kallenbach drew my attention to a problem that had never before struck me. As I have already said, some of the boys at the Farm were bad and unruly. There were loafers, too, amongst them. With these my three boys came in daily contact, as also did other children of the same type as my own sons. This troubled Mr. Kallenbach, but his attention was centred on the impropriety of keeping my boys with these unruly youngsters.

One day he spoke out: 'Your way of mixing your own boys with the bad ones does not appeal to me. It can have only one result. They will become demoralized through this bad company.'

I do not remember whether the question puzzled me at the moment, but I recollect what I said to him:

'How can I distinguish between my boys and the loafers? I am equally responsible for both. The youngsters have come because I invited them.'

If I were to dismiss them with some money, they would immediately run off to Johannesburg and fall back into their old ways. To tell you the truth, it is quite likely that they and their guardians believe that, by having come here, they have laid me under an obligation. That they have to put up with a good deal of inconvenience here, you and I know very well. But my duty is clear. I must have them here, and therefore my boys also must live with them. And surely you do not want me to teach my boys to feel from today that they are superior to other boys. To put that sense of superiority into their heads would be to lead them astray. This association with other boys will be a good discipline for them. They will, of their own accord, learn to discriminate between good and evil. Why should we not believe that, if there is really anything good in them, it is bound to react on their companions? However that may be, I cannot help keeping them here, and if that means some risk, we must run it.'

Mr. Kallenbach shook his head.

The result, I think, cannot be said to have been bad. I do not consider my sons were any the worse for the experiment. On the contrary I can see that they gained something. If there was the slightest trace of superiority in them, it was destroyed and they learnt to mix with all kinds of children. They were tested and disciplined.

This and similar experiments have shown me that, if good children are taught together with bad ones and thrown into their company, they will lose nothing, provided the experiment is conducted under the watchful care of their parents and guardians.

Children wrapped up in cottonwool are not always proof against all temptation or contamination. It is true, however, that when boys and girls of all kinds of upbringing are kept and taught together, the parents and the teachers are put to the severest test. They have constantly to be on the alert.

36. FASTING AS PENANCE

Day by day it became increasingly clear to me how very difficult it was to bring up and educate boys and girls in the right way. If I was to be their real teacher and guardian, I must touch their hearts. I must share their joys and sorrows, I must help them to solve the problems that faced them, and I must take along the right channel the surging aspirations of their youth.

On the release of some of the Satyagrahis from jail, Tolstoy Farm was almost denuded of its inmates. The few that remained mostly belonged

to Phoenix. So I removed them there. Here I had to pass through a fiery ordeal.

In those days I had to move between Johannesburg and Phoenix. Once when I was in Johannesburg I received tidings of the moral fall of two of the inmates of the Ashram. News of an apparent failure or reverse in the Satyagraha struggle would not have shocked me, but this news came upon me like a thunderbolt. The same day I took the train for Phoenix. Mr. Kallenbach insisted on accompanying me. He had noticed the state I was in. He would not brook the thought of my going alone, for he happened to be the bearer of the tidings which had so upset me.

During the journey my duty seemed clear to me. I felt that the guardian or teacher was responsible, to some extent at least, for the lapse of his ward or pupil. So my responsibility regarding the incident in question became clear to me as daylight. My wife had already warned me in the matter, but being of a trusting nature, I had ignored her caution. I felt that the only way the guilty parties could be made to realize my distress and the depth of their own fall would be for me to do some penance. So I imposed upon myself a fast for seven days and a vow to have only one meal a day for a period of four months and a half. Mr. Kallenbach tried to dissuade me, but in vain. He finally conceded the propriety of the penance, and insisted on joining me. I could not resist his transparent affection.

I felt greatly relieved, for the decision meant a heavy load off my mind. The anger against the guilty parties subsided and gave place to the purest pity for them. Thus considerably eased, I reached Phoenix. I made further investigation and acquainted myself with some more details I needed to know.

My penance pained everybody, but it cleared the atmosphere. Everyone came to realize what a terrible thing it was to be sinful, and the bond that bound me to the boys and girls became stronger and truer.

A circumstance arising out of this incident compelled me, a little while after, to go into a fast for fourteen days, the results of which exceeded even my expectations.

It is not my purpose to make out from these incidents that it is the duty of a teacher to resort to fasting whenever there is a delinquency on the part of his pupils. I hold, however, that some occasions do call for this drastic remedy. But it presupposes clearness of vision and spiritual fitness. Where there is no true love between the teacher and the pupil, where the pupil's delinquency has not touched the very being of the teacher and where the pupil has no respect for the teacher, fasting is out of place and may even be harmful. Though there is thus room for doubting the

propriety of fasts in such cases, there is no question about the teacher's responsibility for the errors of his pupil.

The first penance did not prove difficult for any of us. I had to suspend or stop none of my normal activities. It may be recalled that during the whole of this period of penance I was a strict fruitarian. The latter part of the second fast went fairly hard with me. I had not then completely understood the wonderful efficacy of Ramanama, and my capacity for suffering was to that extent less. Besides, I did not know the technique of fasting, especially the necessity of drinking plenty of water, however nauseating or distasteful it might be. Then the fact that the first fast had been an easy affair had made me rather careless as to the second. Thus during the first I took Kuhne baths every day, but during the second I gave them up after two or three days, and drank very little water, as it was distasteful and produced nausea. The throat became parched and weak and during the last days I could speak only in a very low voice. In spite of this, however, my work was carried on through dictation where writing was necessary. I regularly listened to readings from the Ramayana and other sacred books. I had also sufficient strength to discuss and advise in all urgent matters.

37. TO MEET GOKHALE

I must skip many of the recollections of South Africa. At the conclusion of the Satyagraha struggle in 1914, I received Gokhale's instruction to return home via London. So in July Kasturbai, Kallenbach and I sailed for England.

During Satyagraha I had begun travelling third class. I therefore took third class passages for this voyage. But there was a good deal of difference between third class accommodation on the boat on this route and that provided on Indian coastal boats or railway trains. There is hardly sufficient sitting, much less sleeping, accommodation in the Indian service, and little cleanliness. During the voyage to London, on the other hand, there was enough room and cleanliness, and the steamship company had provided special facilities for us. The company had provided reserved closet accommodation for us, and as we were fruitarians, the steward had orders to supply us with fruits and nuts. As a rule third class passengers get little fruit or nuts. These facilities made our eighteen days on the boat quite comfortable.

Some of the incidents during the voyage are well worth recording. Mr. Kallenbach was very fond of binoculars, and had one or two costly

pairs. We had daily discussion over one of these. I tried to impress on him that this possession was not in keeping with the ideal of simplicity that we aspired to reach. Our discussions came to a head one day, as we were standing near the porthole of our cabin.

‘Rather than allow these to be a bone of contention between us, why not throw them into the sea and be done with them?’ said I.

‘Certainly throw the wretched things away.’ said Mr. Kallenbach.

‘I mean it,’ said I.

‘So do I,’ quickly came the reply.

And forthwith I flung them into the sea. They were worth some £7, but their value lay less in their price than in Mr. Kallenbach’s infatuation for them. However, having got rid of them, he never regretted it.

This is but one out of the many incidents that happened between Mr. Kallenbach and me.

Every day we had to learn something new in this way, for both of us were trying to tread the path of Truth. In the march towards Truth, anger, selfishness, hatred, etc., naturally give way, for otherwise Truth would be impossible to attain. A man who is swayed by passions may have good enough intentions, may be truthful in word, but he will never find the Truth. A successful search for Truth means complete deliverance from the dual throng such as of love and hate, happiness and misery.

Not much time had elapsed since my fast when we started on our voyage. I had not regained my normal strength. I used to stroll on duck to get a little exercise, so as to revive my appetite and digest what I ate. But even this exercise was beyond me, causing pain in the calves, so much so that on reaching London I found that I was worse rather than better. There I came to know Dr. Jivraj Mehta. I gave him the history of my fast and subsequent pain, and he said, ‘If you do not take complete rest for a few days, there is a fear of your legs going out of use.’

It was then that I learned that a man emerging from a long fast should not be in a hurry to regain lost strength, and should also put a curb on his appetite. More caution and perhaps more restraint are necessary in breaking a fast than in keeping it.

In Madeira we heard that the great War might break out at any moment. As we entered the English Channel, we received the news of its actual outbreak. We were stopped for some time. It was a difficult business to tow the boat through the submarine mines which had been laid throughout the Channel, and it took about two days to reach Southampton.

War was declared on the 4th of August. We reached London on the 6th.

38. MY PART IN THE WAR

On arrival in England I learned that Gokhale had been stranded in Paris where he had gone for reasons of health, and as communication between Paris and London had been cut off, there was no knowing when he would return. I did not want to go home without having seen him, but no one could say definitely when he would arrive.

What then was I to do in the meanwhile? What was my duty as regards the war? Sorabji Adajania, my comrade in jail and a Satyagrahi, was then reading for the bar in London. As one of the best Satyagrahis he had been sent to England to qualify himself as a barrister, so that he might take my place on return to South Africa. Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta was paying his expenses. With him, and through him, I had conferences with Dr. Jivraj Mehta and others who were prosecuting their studies in England. In consultation with them, a meeting of the Indian residents in Great Britain and Ireland was called. I placed my views before them.

I felt that Indians residing in England ought to do their bit in the war. English students had volunteered to serve in the army, and Indians might do no less. A number of objections were taken to this line of argument. There was, it was contended, a world of difference between the Indians and the English. We were slaves and they were masters. How could a slave co-operate with the master in the hour of the latter's need? Was it not the duty of the slave, seeking to be free, to make the master's need his opportunity? This argument failed to appeal to me then. I knew the difference of status between an Indian and an Englishman, but I did not believe that we had been quite reduced to slavery. I felt then that it was more the fault of individual British officials than of the British system, and that we could convert them by love. If we would improve our status through the help and co-operation of the British, it was our duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need. Though the system was faulty, it did not seem to me to be intolerable, as it does today. But if, having lost my faith in the system, I refuse to co-operate with the British Government today, how could those friends then do so, having lost their faith not only in the system but in the officials as well?

The opposing friends felt that was the hour for making a bold declaration of Indian demands and for improving the status of Indians.

I thought that England's need should not be turned into our opportunity, and that it was more becoming and far-sighted not to press our demands while the war lasted. I therefore adhered to my advice and invited those who would to enlist as volunteers. There was a good

response, practically all the provinces and all the religions being represented among the volunteers.

I wrote a letter to Lord Crewe, acquainting him with these facts, and expressing our readiness to be trained for ambulance work, if that should be considered a condition precedent to the acceptance of our offer.

Lord Crewe accepted the offer after some hesitation, and thanked us for having tendered our services to the Empire at that critical hour.

The volunteers began their preliminary training in first aid to the wounded under the well-known Dr. Cantlie. It was a short course of six weeks, but it covered the whole course of first aid.

We were a class of about 80. In six weeks we were examined, and all except one passed. For these the Government now provided military drill and other training. Colonel Baker was placed in charge of this work.

London in these days was a sight worth seeing. There was no panic, but all were busy helping to the best of their ability. Able-bodied adults began training as combatants, but what were the old, the infirm and the women to do? There was enough work for them, if they wanted. So they employed themselves in cutting and making clothes and dressings for the wounded.

The Lyceum, a ladies' club, undertook to make as many clothes for the soldiers as they could. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu was a member of this club, and threw herself whole-heartedly into the work. This was my first acquaintance with her. She placed before me a heap of clothes which had been cut to pattern, and asked me to get them all sewn up and return them to her. I welcomed her demand and with the assistance of friends got as many clothes made as I could manage during my training for first aid.

39. A SPIRITUAL DILEMMA

As soon as the news reached South Africa that I along with other Indians had offered my services in the war, I received two cables. One of these was from Mr. Polak who questioned the consistency of my action with my profession of ahimsa .

I had to a certain extent anticipated this objection, for I had discussed the question in my Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule , and used to discuss it day in and day out with friends in South Africa. All of us recognized the immorality of war. If I was not prepared to prosecute my assailant, much less should I be willing to participate in a war, especially when I knew nothing of the justice or otherwise of the cause of the combatants.

Friends of course knew that I had previously served in the Boer War, but they assumed that my views had since undergone a change.

As a matter of fact the very same line of argument that persuaded me to take part in the Boer War had weighed with me on this occasion. It was quite clear to me that participation in war could never be consistent with ahimsa . But it is not always given to one to be equally clear about one's duty. A votary of truth is often obliged to grope in the dark.

Ahimsa is a comprehensive principle. We are helpless mortals caught in the conflagration of himsa . The saying that life lives on life has a deep meaning in it. Man cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward himsa . The very fact of his living eating, drinking and moving about necessarily involves some himsa , destruction of life, be it ever so minute. A votary of ahimsa therefore remains true to his faith if the spring of all his actions is compassion, if he shuns to the best of his ability the destruction of the tiniest creature, tries to save it, and thus incessantly strives to be free from the deadly coil of himsa . He will be constantly growing in self-restraint and compassion, but he can never become entirely free from outward himsa .

Then again, because underlying ahimsa is the unity of all life, the error of one cannot but affect all, and hence man cannot be wholly free from himsa . So long as he continues to be a social being, he cannot but participate in the himsa that the very existence of society involves. When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of ahimsa is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet wholeheartedly try to free himself, his nation and the world from war.

I had hoped to improve status and that of my people through the British Empire. Whilst in England I was enjoying the protection of the British Fleet, and taking shelter as I did under its armed might, I was directly participating in its potential violence. Therefore if I desired to retain my connection with the Empire and to live under its banner, one of three courses was open to me: I could declare open resistance to the war and, in accordance with the law of Satyagraha, boycott the Empire until it changed its military policy; or I could seek imprisonment by civil disobedience of such of its laws as were fit to be disobeyed; or I could participate in the war on the side of the Empire and thereby acquire the capacity and fitness for resisting the violence of war. I lacked this capacity and fitness, as I thought there was nothing for it but to serve in the war.

I make no distinction, from the point of view of ahimsa , between combatants and non-combatants. He who volunteers to serve a band of

dacoits, by working as their carrier, or their watchman while they are about their business, or their nurse when they are wounded, is as much guilty of dacoity as the dacoits themselves. In the same way those who confine themselves to attending to the wounded in battle cannot be absolved from the guilt of war.

I had argued the whole thing out to myself in this manner, before I received Polak's cable, and soon after its receipt, I discussed these views with several friends and concluded that it was my duty to offer to serve in the war. Even today I see no flaw in that line of argument, nor am I sorry for my action, holding, as I then did, views favourable to the British connection.

I know that even then I could not carry conviction with all my friends about the correctness of my position. The question is subtle. It admits of differences of opinion, and therefore I have submitted my argument as clearly as possible to those who believe in ahimsa and who are making serious efforts to practise it in every walk of life. A devotee of Truth may not do anything in deference to convention. He must always hold himself open to correction, and whenever he discovers himself to be wrong he must confess it at all costs and atone for it.

40. MINIATURE SATYAGRAHA

Though I thus took part in the war as a matter of duty, it chanced that I was not only unable directly to participate in it, but actually compelled to offer what may be called miniature Satyagraha even at that critical juncture.

I have already said that an officer was appointed in charge of our training, as soon as our names were approved and enlisted. We were all under the impression that this Commanding Officer was to be our chief only so far as technical matters were concerned, and that in all other matters I was the head of our Corps, which was directly responsible to me in matters of internal discipline; that is to say, the Commanding Officer had to deal with the Corps through me. But from the first the Officer left us under no much delusion.

Mr. Sorabji Adajania was a shrewd man. He warned me. 'Beware of this man,' he said. 'He seems inclined to lord it over us. We will have none of his orders. We are prepared to look upon him as our instructor. But the youngsters he has appointed to instruct us also feel as though they had come as our masters.'

These youngsters were Oxford students who had come to instruct us and whom the Commanding Officer had appointed to be our section leaders.

I also had not failed to notice the high-handedness of the Commanding Officer, but I asked Sorabji not to be anxious and tried to pacify him. But he was not the man to be easily convinced.

‘You are too trusting. Those people will deceive you with wretched words, and when at last you see through them, you will ask us to resort to Satyagraha, and so come to grief, and bring us all to grief along with you,’ said he with a smile.

‘What else but grief can you hope to come to after having cast in your lot with me?’ said I. ‘A Satyagrahi is born to be deceived. Let the Commanding Officer deceive us. Have I not told you times without number that ultimately a deceiver only deceives himself?’

Sorabji gave a loud laugh. ‘Well, then,’ said he, ‘continue to be deceived. You will some day meet your death in Satyagraha and drag poor mortals like me behind you.’

These words put me in mind of what the late Miss Emily Hobhouse wrote to me with regard to non-co-operation: ‘I should not be surprised if one of these days you have to go to the gallows for the sake of truth. May God show you the right path and protect you.’

The talk with Sorabji took place just after the appointment of the Commanding Officer. In a very few days our relations with him reached the breaking point. I had hardly regained my strength after the fourteen days’ fast, when I began to take part in the drill, often walking to the appointed place about two miles from home. This gave me pleurisy and laid me low. In this condition I had to go week-end camping. Whilst the others stayed there, I returned home. It was here that an occasion arose for Satyagraha.

The Commanding Officer began to exercise his authority somewhat freely. He gave us clearly to understand that he was our head in all matters, military and non-military, giving us at the same time a taste of his authority. Sorabji hurried to me. He was not at all prepared to put up with this high-handedness. He said: ‘We must have all orders through you. We are still in the training camp and all sorts of absurd orders are being issued. Invidious distinctions are made between ourselves and those youths who have been appointed to instruct us. We must have it out with the Commanding Officer, otherwise we shall not be able to go on any longer. The Indian students and others who have joined our Corps are not going

to abide by any absurd orders. In a cause which has been taken up for the sake of self-respect, it is unthinkable to put up with loss of it.'

I approached the Commanding Officer and drew his attention to the complaints I had received. He wrote asking me to set out the complaints in writing, at the same time asking me 'to impress upon those who complain that the proper direction in which to make complaints is to me through their section commanders, now appointed, who will inform me through the instructors.'

To this I replied saying that I claimed no authority, that in the military sense I was no more than any other private, but that I had believed that as Chairman of the Volunteer Corps, I should be allowed unofficially to act as their representative. I also set out the grievances and requests that had been brought to my notice, namely, that grievous dissatisfaction had been caused by the appointment of section leaders without reference to the feeling of the members of the Corps; that they be recalled, and the Corps be invited to elect section leaders, subject to the Commander's approval.

This did not appeal to the Commanding Officer, who said it was repugnant to all military discipline that the section leaders should be elected by the Corps, and that the recall of appointments already made would be subversive of all discipline.

So we held a meeting and decided upon withdrawal. I brought home to the members the serious consequences of Satyagraha. But a very large majority voted for the resolution, which was to the effect that, unless the appointments of Corporals already made were recalled and the members of the Corps given an opportunity of electing their own Corporals, the members would be obliged to abstain from further drilling and week-end camping.

I then addressed a letter to the Commanding Officer telling him what a severe disappointment his letter rejecting my suggestion had been. I assured him that I was most anxious to serve. I also drew his attention to a precedent. I pointed out that, although I occupied no official rank in the South African Indian Ambulance Corps at the time of the Boer War, there was never a hitch between Colonel Gallwey and the Corps, and the Colonel never took a step without reference to me with a view to ascertain the wishes of the Corps. I also enclosed a copy of the resolution we had passed the previous evening.

This had no good effect on the Officer, who felt that the meeting and the resolution were a grave breach of discipline.

Hereupon I addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for India, acquainting him with all the facts and enclosing a copy of the resolution.

He replied explaining that conditions in South Africa were different, and drawing my attentions to the fact that under the rules the section commanders were appointed by the Commanding Officer, but assuring me that in future, when appointing section commanders, the Commanding Officer would consider my recommendations.

A good deal of correspondence passed between us after this, but I do not want to prolong the bitter tale. Suffice it to say that my experience was of a piece with the experiences we daily have in India. What with threats and what with adroitness the Commanding Officer succeeded in creating a division in our Corps. Some of those who had voted for the resolution yielded to the Commander's threats or persuasions and went back on their promise.

About this time an unexpectedly large contingent of wounded soldiers arrived at the Netley Hospital, and the services of our Corps were requisitioned. Those whom the Commanding Officer could persuade went to Netley. The others refused to go. I was on my back, but was in communication with the members of the Corps. Mr. Roberts, the Under-Secretary of State, honoured me with many calls during those days. He insisted on my persuading the others to serve. He suggested that they should form a separate Corps and that at the Netley Hospital they could be responsible only to the Commanding Officer there, so that there would be no question of loss of self-respect, Government would be placated, and at same time helpful service would be rendered to the large number of wounded received at the hospital. This suggestion appealed both to my companions and to me, with the result that those who had stayed away also went to Netley.

Only I remained away, lying on my back and making the best of a bad job.

41. GOKHALE'S CHARITY

I have already referred to the attack of pleurisy I had in England. Gokhale returned to London soon after. Kallenbach and I used regularly to go to him. Our talks were mostly about the war, and as Kallenbach had the geography of Germany at his finger tips, and had travelled much in Europe, he used to show him on the map the various places in connection with the war.

When I got pleurisy this also became a topic of daily discussion. My dietetic experiments were going on even then. My diet consisted, among other things, of groundnuts, ripe and unripe bananas, lemon, olive oil,

tomatoes and grapes. I completely eschewed milk, cereals, pulses and other things.

Dr. Jivraj Mehta treated me. He pressed me hard to resume milk and cereals, but I was obdurate. The matter reached Gokhale's ears. He had not much regard for my reasoning in favour of a fruitarian diet, and he wanted me to take whatever the doctor prescribed for my health.

It was no easy thing for me not to yield to Gokhale's pressure. When he would not take a refusal, I begged him to give me twenty-four hours for thinking over the question. As Kallenbach and I returned home that evening, we discussed where my duty lay. He had been with me in my experiment. He liked it, but I saw that he was agreeable to my giving it up if my health demanded it. So I had to decide for myself according to the dictates of the inner voice.

I spent the whole night thinking over the matter. To give up the experiment would mean renouncing all my ideas in that direction, and yet I found no flaw in them. The question was how far I should yield to Gokhale's loving pressure, and how far I might modify my experiment in the so-called interests of health. I finally decided to adhere to the experiment in so far as the motive behind was chiefly religious, and to yield to the doctor's advice where the motive was mixed. Religious considerations had been predominant in the giving up of milk. I had before me a picture of the wicked processes the govals in Calcutta adopted to extract the last drop of milk from their cows and buffaloes. I also had the feeling that, just as meat was not man's food, even so animal's milk could not be man's food. So I got up in the morning with the determination to adhere to my resolve to abstain from milk. This greatly relieved me. I dreaded to approach Gokhale, but I trusted him to respect my decision.

In the evening Kallenbach and I called on Gokhale at the National Liberal Club. The first question he asked me was: 'Well, have you decided to accept the doctor's advice?'

I gently but firmly replied: 'I am willing to yield on all points except one about which I beg you not to press me. I will not take milk, milk-products or meat. If not to take these things should mean my death, I feel I had better face it.'

'Is this your final decision?' asked Gokhale.

'I am afraid I cannot decide otherwise,' said I. 'I know that my decision will pain you, but I beg your forgiveness.'

With a certain amount of pain but with deep affection, Gokhale said: 'I do not approve of your decision. I do not see any religion in it. But I won't press you any more.' With these words he turned to Dr. Jivraj Mehta

and said: 'Please don't worry him any more. Prescribe anything you like within the limit he has set for himself.'

The doctor expressed dissent, but was helpless. He advised me to take mung soup., with a dash of asafoetida in it. To this I agreed. I took it for a day or two, but it increased my pain. As I did not find it suitable, I went back to fruits and nuts. The doctor of course went on with his external treatment. The latter somewhat relieved my pain, but my restrictions were to him a sore handicap.

Meanwhile Gokhale left for home, as he could not stand the October fogs of London.

42. TREATMENT OF PLEURISY

The persistence of the pleurisy caused some anxiety, but I knew that the cure lay not in taking medicine internally but in dietetic changes assisted by external remedies.

I called in Dr. Allinson of vegetarian fame, who treated diseases by dietetic modifications and whom I had met in 1890. He thoroughly overhauled me. I explained to him how I had pledged myself not to take milk. He cheered me up and said: 'You need not take milk. In fact I want you to do without any fat for some days.' He then advised me to live on plain brown bread, raw vegetables such as beet, radish, onion and other tubers and greens, and also fresh fruit, mainly oranges. The vegetables were not to be cooked but merely grated fine, if I could not masticate them.

I adopted this for about three days, but raw vegetables did not quite suit me. My body was not in a condition to enable me to do full justice to the experiment. I was nervous about taking raw vegetables.

Dr. Allinson also advised me to keep all the windows of my room open for the whole twenty-four hours, bathe in tepid water, have an oil massage on the affected parts and a walk in the open for fifteen to thirty minutes. I liked all these suggestions.

My room had French windows which, if kept wide open, would let in the rain. The fanlight could not be opened. I therefore got the glass broken, so as to let in fresh air, and I partially opened the windows in a manner not to let in rain.

All these measures somewhat improved my health, but did not completely cure me.

Lady Cecilia Roberts occasionally called on me. We became friends. She wanted very much to persuade me to take milk. But as I was unyielding, she hunted about for a substitute for milk. Some friend

suggested to her malted milk, assuring her quite unknowingly that it was absolutely free from milk, and that it was a chemical preparation with all the properties of milk. Lady Cecilia, I knew, had a great regard for my religious scruples, and so I implicitly trusted her. I dissolved the powder in water and took it only to find that it tasted just like milk. I read the label on the bottle, to find, only too late, that it was a preparation of milk. So I gave it up.

I informed Lady Cecilia about the discovery, asking her not to worry over it. She came post haste to me to say how sorry she was. Her friend had not read the label at all. I begged her not to be anxious and expressed my regret that I could not avail myself of the thing she had procured with so much trouble. I also assured her that I did not at all feel upset or guilty over having taken milk under a misapprehension.

I must skip over many other sweet reminiscences of my contact with Lady Cecilia. I could think of many friends who have been a source of great comfort to me in the midst of trials and disappointments. One who has faith reads in them the merciful providence of God, who thus sweetens sorrow itself.

Dr. Allinson, when he next called, relaxed his restrictions and permitted me to have groundnut butter or olive oil for the sake of fat, and to take the vegetables cooked, if I chose, with rice. These changes were quite welcome, but they were far from giving me a complete cure. Very careful nursing was still necessary, and I was obliged to keep mostly in bed.

Dr. Mehta occasionally looked in to examine me and held out a standing offer to cure me if only I would listen to his advice.

Whilst things were going on in this way, Mr. Roberts one day came to see me and urged me very strongly to go home. 'You cannot possibly go to Netley in this condition. There is still severer cold ahead of us. I would strongly advise you to get back to India, for it is only there that you can be completely cured. If, after your recovery, you should find the war still going on, you will have many opportunities there of rendering help. As it is, I do not regard what you have already done as by any means a mean contribution.'

I accepted his advice and began to make preparations for returning to India.

43. HOMEWARD

Mr. Kallenbach had accompanied me to England with a view to going to India. We were staying together and of course wanted to sail by the

same boat. Germans, however, were under such strict surveillance that we had our doubts about Mr. Kallenbach getting a passport. I did my best to get it, and Mr. Roberts, who was in favour of his getting his passport, sent a cable to the Viceroy in this behalf. But straight came Lord Hardinge's reply: 'Regret Government of India not prepared to take any such risk.' All of us understood the force of the reply.

It was a great wrench for me to part from Mr. Kallenbach, but I could see that his pang was greater. Could he have come to India, he would have been leading today the simple happy life of a farmer and weaver. Now he is in South Africa, leading his old life and doing brisk business as an architect.

We wanted a third class passage, but as there was none available on P. and O. boats, we had to go second.

We took with us the dried fruit we had carried from South Africa, as most of it would not be procurable on the boat, where fresh fruit was easily available.

Dr. Jivraj Mehta had bandaged my ribs with 'Mede's Plaster' and had asked me not to remove it till we reached the Red Sea. For two days I put up with the discomfort, but finally it became too much for me. It was with considerable difficulty that I managed to undo the plaster and regain the liberty of having a proper wash and bath.

My diet consisted mostly of nuts and fruits. I found that I was improving every day and felt very much better by the time we entered the Suez Canal. I was weak, but felt entirely out of danger, and I gradually went on increasing my exercise. The improvement I attributed largely to the pure air of the temperate zone.

Whether it was due to past experience or to any other reason, I do not know, but the kind of distance I noticed between the English and Indian passengers on the boat was something I had not observed even on my voyage from South Africa. I did talk to a few Englishmen, but the talk was mostly formal. There were hardly any cordial conversations such as had certainly taken place on the South African boats. The reason for this was, I think, to be found in the conscious or unconscious feeling at the back of the Englishman's mind that he belonged to the ruling race, and the feeling at the back of the Indian's mind that he belonged to the subject race.

I was eager to reach home and get free from this atmosphere.

On arriving at Aden we already began to feel somewhat at home. We knew the Adenwallas very well, having met Mr. Kekobad Kavasji Dinshaw in Durban and come in close contact with him and his wife.

A few days more and we reached Bombay. It was such a joy to get back to the homeland after an exile of ten years.

Gokhale had inspired a reception for me in Bombay, where he had come in spite of his delicate health. I had approached India in the ardent hope of merging myself in him, and thereby feeling free. But fate had willed it otherwise.

44. SOME REMINISCENCES OF THE BAR

Before coming to a narrative of the course my life took in India, it seems necessary to recall a few of the South African experiences which I have deliberately left out.

Some lawyer friends have asked me to give my reminiscences of the bar. The number of these is so large that, if I were to describe them all, they would occupy a volume by themselves and take me out of my scope. But it may not perhaps be improper to recall some of those which bear upon the practice of truth.

So far as I can recollect, I have already said that I never resorted to untruth in my profession, and that a large part of my legal practice was in the interest of public work, for which I charged nothing beyond out-of-pocket expenses, and these too I sometimes met myself. I had thought that in saying this I had said all that was necessary as regards my legal practice. But friends want me to do more. They seem to think that, if I described however slightly, some of the occasions when I refused to swerve from the truth, the legal profession might profit by it.

As a student I had heard that the lawyer's profession was a liar's profession. But this did not influence me, as I had no intention of earning either position or money by lying.

My principle was put to the test many a time in South Africa. Often I knew that my opponents had tutored their witnesses, and if I only encouraged my client or his witnesses to lie, we could win the case. But I always resisted the temptation. I remember only one occasion when, after having won a case, I suspected that my client had deceived me. In my heart of hearts I always wished that I should win only if my client's case was right. In fixing my fees I do not recall ever having made them conditional on my winning the case. Whether my client won or lost, I expected nothing more nor less than my fees.

I warned every new client at the outset that he should not expect me to take up a false case or to coach the witnesses, with the result that I built up such a reputation that no false cases used to come to me. Indeed some

of my clients would keep their clean cases for me, and take the doubtful ones elsewhere.

There was one case which proved a severe trial. It was brought to me by one of my best clients. It was a case of highly complicated accounts and had been a prolonged one. It had been heard in parts before several courts. Ultimately the book-keeping portion of it was entrusted by the court to the arbitration of some qualified accountants. The award was entirely in favour of my client, but the arbitrators had inadvertently committed an error in calculation which, however small, was serious, inasmuch as an entry which ought to have been on the debit side was made on the credit side. The opponents had opposed the award on other grounds. I was junior counsel for my client. When the senior counsel became aware of the error, he was of opinion that our client was not bound to admit it. He was clearly of opinion that no counsel was bound to admit anything that went against his client's interest. I said we ought to admit the error.

But the senior counsel contended: 'In that case there is every likelihood of the court cancelling the whole award, and no sane counsel would imperil his client's case to that extent. At any rate I would be the last man to take any such risk. If the case were to be sent up for a fresh hearing, one could never tell what expenses our client might have to incur, and what the ultimate result might be!'

The client was present when this conversation took place.

I said: 'I feel that both our client and we ought to run the risk. Where is the certainty of the court upholding a wrong award simply because we do not admit the error? And supposing the admission were to bring the client to grief, what harm is there?'

'But why should we make the admission at all?' said the senior counsel.

'Where is the surety of the court not detecting the error or our opponent not discovering it?' said I.

'Well then, will you argue the case? I am not prepared to argue it on your terms,' replied the senior counsel with decision.

I humbly answered: 'If you will not argue, then I am prepared to do so, if our client so desires. I shall have nothing to do with the case if the error is not admitted.'

With this I looked at my client. He was a little embarrassed. I had been in the case from the very first. The client fully trusted me, and knew me through and through. He said: 'Well, then, you will argue the case and admit the error. Let us lose, if that is to be our lot. God defend the right.'

I was delighted. I had expected nothing less from him. The senior counsel again warned me, pitied me for my obduracy, but congratulated me all the same. What happened in the court we shall see in the next chapter.

45. SHARP PRACTICE?

I had no doubt about the soundness of my advice, but I doubted very much my fitness for doing full justice to the case. I felt it would be a most hazardous undertaking to argue such a difficult case before the Supreme Court, and I appeared before the Bench in fear and trembling.

As soon as I referred to the error in the accounts, one of the judges said:

‘Is not this sharp practice, Mr. Gandhi?’

I boiled within to hear this charge. It was intolerable to be accused of sharp practice when there was not the slightest warrant for it.

‘With a judge prejudiced from the start like this, there is little chance of success in this difficult case,’ I said to myself. But I composed my thoughts and answered:

‘I am surprised that your Lordship should suspect sharp practice without hearing me out.’

‘No question of a charge,’ said the judge. ‘It is a mere suggestion.’

‘The suggestion here seems to me to amount to a charge. I would ask your Lordship to hear me out and then arraign me if there is any occasion for it.’

‘I am sorry to have interrupted you,’ replied the judge. ‘Pray do go on with your explanation of the discrepancy.’

I had enough material in support of my explanation. Thanks to the judge having raised this question, I was able to rivet the Court’s attention on my argument from the very start. I felt much encouraged and took the opportunity of entering into a detailed explanation. The Court gave me a patient hearing, and I was able to convince the judges that the discrepancy was due entirely to inadvertence. They therefore did not feel disposed to cancel the whole award, which had involved considerable labour.

The opposing counsel seemed to feel secure in the belief that not much argument would be needed after the error had been admitted. But the judges continued to interrupt him, as they were convinced that the error was a slip which could be easily rectified. The counsel laboured hard to attack the award, but the judge who had originally started with the suspicion had now come round definitely to my side.

‘Supposing Mr. Gandhi had not admitted the error, what would you have done?’ he asked.

‘It was impossible for us to secure the services of a more competent and honest expert accountant than the one appointed by us.’

‘The Court must presume that you know your case best. If you cannot point out anything beyond the slip which any expert accountant is liable to commit, the Court will be loath to compel the parties to go in for fresh litigation and fresh expenses because of a patent mistake. We may not order a fresh hearing when such an error can be easily corrected continued the judge.

And so the counsel’s objection was overruled. The Court either confirmed the award, with the error rectified, or ordered the arbitrator to rectify the error, I forget which.

I was delighted. So were my client and senior counsel; and I was confirmed in my conviction that it was not impossible to practise law without compromising truth.

Let the reader, however, remember that even truthfulness in the practice of the profession cannot cure it of the fundamental defect that vitiates it.

46. CLIENTS TURNED CO-WORKERS

The distinction between the legal practice in Natal and that in the Transvaal was that in Natal there was a joint bar; a barrister, whilst he was admitted to the rank of advocate, could also practise as an attorney; whereas in the Transvaal, as in Bombay, the spheres of attorneys and advocates were distinct. A barrister had the right of election whether he would practise as an advocate or as an attorney. So whilst in Natal I was admitted as an advocate, in the Transvaal I sought admission as an attorney. For as an advocate I could not have come in direct contact with the Indians and the white attorneys in South Africa would not have briefed me.

But even in the Transvaal it was open to attorneys to appear before magistrates. On one occasion, whilst I was conducting a case before a magistrate in Johannesburg, I discovered that my client had deceived me. I saw him completely break down in the witness box. So without any argument I asked the magistrate to dismiss the case. The opposing counsel was astonished, and the magistrate was pleased. I rebuked my client for bringing a false case to me. He knew that I never accepted false cases, and when I brought the thing home to him, he admitted his mistake, and I have an impression that he was not angry with me for having asked the

magistrate to decide against him. At any rate my conduct in this case did not affect my practice for the worse, indeed it made my work easier. I also saw that my devotion to truth enhanced my reputation amongst the members of the profession, and in spite of the handicap of colour I was able in some cases to win even their affection.

During my professional work it was also my habit never to conceal my ignorance from my clients or my colleagues. Wherever I felt myself at sea, I would advise my client to consult some other counsel, or if he preferred to stick to me, I would ask him to let me seek the assistance of senior counsel. This frankness earned me the unbounded affection and trust of my clients. They were always willing to pay the fee whenever consultation with senior counsel was necessary. This affection and trust served me in good stead in my public work.

I have indicated in the foregoing chapters that my object in practising in South Africa was service of the community. Even for this purpose, winning the confidence of the people was an indispensable condition. The large hearted Indian magnified into service professional work done for money, and when I advised them to suffer the hardships of imprisonment for the sake of their rights, many of them cheerfully accepted the advice, not so much because they had reasoned out the correctness of the course, as because of their confidence in, and affection for, me.

As I write this, many a sweet reminiscence comes to my mind. Hundreds of clients became friends and real co-workers in public service, and their association sweetened a life that was otherwise full of difficulties and dangers.

47. HOW A CLIENT WAS SAVED

The reader, by now, will be quite familiar with Parsi Rustomji's name. He was one who became at once my client and co-worker, or perhaps it would be truer to say that he first became co-worker and then client. I won his confidence to such an extent that he sought and followed my advice also in private domestic matters. Even when he was ill, he would seek my aid, and though there was much difference between our ways of living, he did not hesitate to accept my quack treatment.

This friend once got into a very bad scrape. Though he kept me informed of most of his affairs, he had studiously kept back one thing. He was a large importer of goods from Bombay and Calcutta, and not infrequently he resorted to smuggling. But as he was on the best terms with customs officials, no one was inclined to suspect him. In charging

duty, they used to take his invoices on trust. Some might even have connived at the smuggling.

But to use the telling simile of the Gujarati poet Akho, theft like quicksilver won't be suppressed, and Parsi Rustomji's proved no exception. The good friend ran post haste to me, the tears rolling down his cheeks as he said: 'Bhai, I have deceived you. My guilt has been discovered today. I have smuggled and I am doomed. I must go to jail and be ruined. You alone may be able to save me from this predicament. I have kept back nothing else from you, but I thought I ought not to bother you with such tricks of the trade, and so I never told you about this smuggling. But now, how much I repent it!'

I calmed him and said: 'To save or not to save you is in His hands. As to me you know my way. I can but try to save you by means of confession.'

The good Parsi felt deeply mortified.

'But is not my confession before you enough?' he asked.

'You have wronged not me but Government. How will the confession made before me avail you?' I replied gently.

'Of course I will do just as you advise, but will you not consult with my old counsel Mr.—? He is a friend too,' said Parsi Rustomji.

Inquiry revealed that the smuggling had been going on for a long time, but the actual offence detected involved a trifling sum. We went to his counsel. He perused the papers, and said: 'The case will be tried by a jury, and a Natal jury will be the last to acquit an Indian. But I will not give up hope.'

I did not know this counsel intimately. Parsi Rustomji intercepted: 'I thank you, but I should like to be guided by Mr. Gandhi's advice in this case. He knows me intimately. Of course you will advise him whenever necessary.'

Having thus shelved the counsel's question, we went to Parsi Rustomji's shop.

And now explaining my view I said to him: 'I don't think this case should be taken to court at all. It rests with the Customs Officer to prosecute you or to let you go, and he in turn will have to be guided by the Attorney General. I am prepared to meet both. I propose that you should offer to pay the penalty that fix, and the odds are that they will be agreeable. But if they are not, you must be prepared to go to jail. I am of opinion that the shame lies not so much in going to jail as in committing the offence. The deed of shame has already been done. Imprisonment

you should regard as a penance. The real penance lies in resolving never to smuggle again.'

I cannot say that Parsi Rustomji took all this quite well. He was a brave man, but his courage failed him for the moment. His name and fame were at stake, and where would he be if the edifice he had reared with such care and labour should go to pieces?

'Well, I have told you,' he said, 'that I am entirely in your hands. You may do just as you like.'

I brought to bear on this case all my powers of persuasion. I met the Customs Officer and fearlessly apprised him of the whole affair. I also promised to place all the books at his disposal and told him how penitent Parsi Rustomji was feeling

The Customs Officer said: 'I like the old Parsi. I am sorry he has made a fool of himself. You know where my duty lies. I must be guided by the Attorney General and so I would advise you to use all your persuasion with him.'

'I shall be thankful,' said I, 'if you do not insist on dragging him into court.'

Having got him to promise this, I entered into correspondence with the Attorney General and also met him. I am glad to say that he appreciated my complete frankness and was convinced that I had kept back nothing.

I now forget whether it was in connection with this or with some other case that my persistence and frankness extorted from him the remark: 'I see you will never take a no for an answer.'

The case against Parsi Rustomji was compromised. He was to pay a penalty equal to twice the amount he had confessed to having smuggled. Rustomji reduced to writing the facts of the whole case, got the paper framed and hung it up in his office to serve as a perpetual reminder to his heirs and fellow merchants.

These friends Rustomji warned me not to be taken in by this transitory contrition. When I told Rustomji about this warning he said: 'What would be my fate if I deceived you?'

PART FIVE

1. THE FIRST EXPERIENCE

Before I reached home, the party which had started from Phoenix had already arrived. According to our original plan I was to have preceded them, but my preoccupation in England with the war had upset all our calculations, and when I saw that I had to be detained in England indefinitely, I was faced with the question of finding them all to stay together the Phoenix party. I wanted them all to stay together in India, if possible, and to live the life they had led at Phoenix. I did not know of any Ashram to which I could recommend them to go, and therefore cabled to them to meet Mr. Andrews and do as he advised.

So they were first put in the Gurukul, Kangri, where the late Swami Shraddhanandji treated them as his own children. After this they were put in the Shantiniketan Ashram, where the Poet and his people showered similar love upon them. The experiences they gathered at both these places too stood them and me in good stead.

The Poet, Shraddhanandji and Principal Sushil Rudra, as I used to say to Andrews, composed his trinity. When in South Africa he was never tired of speaking of them, and of my many sweet memories of South Africa, Mr. Andrews' talks, day in and day out, of this great trinity, are amongst the sweetest and most vivid. Mr. Andrews naturally put the Phoenix party in touch also with Sushil Rudra. Principal Rudra had no Ashram, but he had a home which he placed completely at the disposal of the Phoenix family. Within a day of their arrival, his people made them deal so thoroughly at home that they did not seem to miss Phoenix at all.

It was only when I landed in Bombay that I learnt that the Phoenix party was at Shantiniketan. I was therefore impatient to meet them as soon as I could after my meeting with Gokhale.

The receptions in Bombay gave me an occasion for offering what might be called a little Satyagraha.

At the party given in my honour at Mr. Jehangir Petit's place, I did not dare to speak in Gujarati. In those palatial surroundings of dazzling splendour I, who had lived my best life among indentured labourers, felt myself a complete rustic. With my Kathiawadi cloak, turban and dhoti, I looked somewhat more civilized than I do today, but the pomp and splendour of Mr. Petit's mansion made me feel absolutely out of my element. However, I acquitted myself tolerably well, having taken shelter under Sir Pherozeshah's protecting wing.

Then there was the Gujarati function. The Gujaratis would not let me go without a reception, which was organized by the late Uttamlal Trivedi. I had acquainted myself with the programme beforehand. Mr. Jinnah was present, being a Gujarati, I forget whether as president or as the principal speaker. He made a short and sweet little speech in English. As far as I remember most of the other speeches were also in English. When my turn came, I expressed my thanks in Gujarati explaining my partiality for Gujarati and Hindustani, and entering my humble protest against the use of English in a Gujarati gathering. This I did, not without some hesitation, for I was afraid lest it should be considered discourteous for an inexperienced man, returned home after a long exile, to enter his protest against established practices. But no one seemed to misunderstand my insistence on replying in Gujarati. In fact I was glad to note that everyone seemed reconciled to my protest.

The meeting thus emboldened me to think that I should not find it difficult to place my new-fangled notions before my countrymen.

After a brief stay in Bombay, full of these preliminary experiences, I went to Poona whither Gokhale had summoned me.

2. WITH GOKHALE IN POONA

The moment I reached Bombay Gokhale sent me word that the Governor was desirous of seeing me, and that it might be proper for me to respond before I left for Poona. Accordingly I called on His Excellency. After the usual inquiries, he said:

'I ask one thing of you. I would like you to come and see me whenever you propose to take any steps concerning Government.'

I replied:

'I can very easily give the promise, inasmuch as it is my rule, as a Satyagrahi, to understand the viewpoint of the party I propose to deal

with, and to try to agree with him as far as may be possible. I strictly observed the rule in South Africa and I mean to do the same here.'

Lord Willingdon thanked me and said:

'You may come to me whenever you like, and you will see that my Government do not wilfully do anything wrong.'

To which I replied: 'It is that faith which sustains me.'

After this I went to Poona. It is impossible for me to set down all the reminiscences of this precious time. Gokhale and the members of the Servants of India Society overwhelmed me with affection. So far as I recollect, Gokhale had summoned all of them to meet me. I had a frank talk with them all on every sort of subject.

Gokhale was very keen that I should join the Society and so was I. But the members felt that, as there was a great difference between my ideals and methods of work and theirs, it might not be proper for me to join the Society. Gokhale believed that, in spite of my insistence on my own principles, I was equally ready and able to tolerate theirs.

'But,' he said, 'the members of the Society have not yet understood your readiness for compromise. They are tenacious of their principles, and quite independent. I am hoping that they will accept you, but if they don't you will not for a moment think that they are lacking in respect or love for you. They are hesitating to take any risk lest their high regard for you should be jeopardized. But whether you are formally admitted as a member or not, I am going to look upon you as one.'

I informed Gokhale of my intentions. Whether I was admitted as a member or not, I wanted to have an Ashram where I could settle down with my Phoenix family, preferably somewhere in Gujarat, as, being a Gujarati, I thought I was best fitted to serve the country through serving Gujarat. Gokhale liked the idea. He said: 'You should certainly do so. Whatever may be the result of your talks with the members, you must look to me for the expenses of the Ashram, which I will regard as my own.'

My heart overflowed with joy. It was a pleasure to feel free from the responsibility of raising funds, and to realize that I should not be obliged to set about the work all on my own, but that I should be able to count on a sure guide whenever I was in difficulty. This took a great load off my mind.

So the late Dr. Dev was summoned and told to open an account for me in the Society's books and to give me whatever I might require for the Ashram and for public expenses.

I now prepared to go to Shantiniketan. On the eve of my departure Gokhale arranged a party of selected friends, taking good care to order refreshments of my liking, i.e., fruits and nuts. The party was held just a few paces from his room, and yet he was hardly in a condition to walk across and attend it. But his affection for me got the better of him and he insisted on coming. He came, but fainted and had to be carried away. Such fainting was not a new thing with him and so when he came to, he sent word that we must go on with the party.

This party was of course no more than a conversazione in the open space opposite the Society's guesthouse, during which friends had heart-to-heart chats over light refreshments of groundnuts, dates and fresh fruits of the season.

But the fainting fit was to be no common event in my life.

3. WAS IT A THREAT ?

From Poona I went to Rajkot and Porbandar, where I had to meet my brother's widow and other relatives.

During the Satyagraha in South Africa I had altered my style of dress so as to make it more in keeping with that of the indentured labourers, and in England also I had adhered to the same style for indoor use. For landing in Bombay I had a Kathiawadi suit of clothes consisting of a shirt, a dhoti, a cloak and a white scarf, all made of Indian mill cloth. But as I was to travel third from Bombay, I regarded the scarf and the cloak as too much of an incumbrance, so I shed them, and invested in an eight-to-ten-annas Kashmiri cap. One dressed in that fashion was sure to pass muster as a poor man.

On account of the plague prevailing at that time third class passengers were being medically inspected at Viramgam or Wadhwan I forget which. I had slight fever. The inspector on finding that I had a temperature asked me to report myself to the Medical Officer at Rajkot and noted down my name.

Someone had perhaps sent the information that I was passing through Wadhwan, for the tailor Motilal, a noted public worker of the place, met me at the station. He told me about the Viramgam customs, and the hardships railway passengers had to suffer on account of it. I had little inclination to talk because of my fever, and tried to finish with a brief reply which took the form of a question:

‘Are you prepared to go to jail?’

I had taken Motilal to be one of those impetuous youths who do not think before speaking. But not so Motilal. He replied with firm deliberation:

‘We will certainly go to jail, provided you lead us. As kathiawadis, we have the first right on you. Of course we do not mean to detain you now, but you must promise to halt here on your return. You will be delighted to see the work and the spirit of our youths, and you may trust us to respond as soon as you summon us.’

Motilal captivated me. His comrade eulogizing him, said:

‘Our friend is but a tailor. But he is such a master of his profession that he easily earns Rs. 15 a month which is just what he needs working an hour a day, and gives the rest of his time to public work. He leads us all, putting our education to shame.

Later I came in close contact with Motilal, and I saw that there was no exaggeration in the eulogy. He made a point of spending some days in the then newly started Ashram every month to teach the children tailoring and to do some of the tailoring of the Ashram himself. He would talk to me every day of Viramgam, and the hardships of the passengers, which had become absolutely unbearable for him. He was cut off in the prime of youth by a sudden illness, and public life at Wadhwan suffered without him.

On reaching Rajkot, I reported myself to the Medical officer the next morning. I was not unknown there. The Doctor felt ashamed and was angry with the inspector. This was unnecessary, for the inspector had only done his duty. He did not know me, and even if he had known me, he should have done otherwise. The Medical Officer would not let me go to him again insisted on sending an inspector to me instead.

Inspection of third class passengers for sanitary reasons is essential on such occasions. If big men choose to travel third, whatever their position in life, they must voluntarily submit themselves to all the regulations that the poor are subject to, and the officials ought to be impartial. My experience is that the officials, instead of looking upon third class passengers as fellowmen, regard them as so many sheep. They talk to them contemptuously, and brook no reply or argument. The third class passenger has to obey the official as though he were his servant, and the latter may with impunity belabour and blackmail him, and book him his ticket only putting him to the greatest possible inconvenience, including often missing the train. All this I have seen with my own eyes. No reform is possible unless some of the educated and the rich voluntarily accept the status of the poor, travel third, refuse to enjoy the amenities denied to

the poor and, instead of taking avoidable hardships, discourtesies and injustice as a matter of course, fight for their removal.

Wherever I went in Kathiawad I heard complaints about the Viramgam customs hardships. I therefore decided immediately to make use of Lord Willingdon's offer. I collected and read all the literature available on the subject, convinced myself that the complaints were well founded, and opened correspondence with the Bombay Government. I called on the Private Secretary to Lord Willingdon and waited on His Excellency also. The latter expressed his sympathy but shifted the blame on Delhi. 'If it had been in our hands, we should have removed the cordon long ago. You should approach the Government of India,' said the secretary.

I communicated with the Government of India, but got no reply beyond an acknowledgment. It was only when I had an occasion to meet Lord Chelmsford later that redress could be had. When I placed the facts before him, he expressed his astonishment. He had known nothing of the matter. He gave me a patient hearing, telephoned that very moment for papers about Viramgam, and promised to remove the cordon if the authorities had no explanation or defence to offer. Within a few days of this interview I read in the papers that the Viramgam customs cordon had been removed.

I regarded this event as the advent of Satyagraha in India. For during my interview with the Bombay Government the Secretary had expressed his disapproval of a reference to Satyagraha in a speech which I had delivered in Bagasra (in Kathiawad).

'Is not this a threat?' he had asked. 'And do you think a powerful Government will yield to threats?'

'This was no threat', I had replied. 'It was educating the people. It is my duty to place before the people all the legitimate remedies for grievances. A nation that wants to come into its own ought to know all the ways and means to freedom. Usually they include violence as the last remedy. Satyagraha, on the other hand, is an absolutely non-violent weapon. I regard it as my duty to explain its practice and its limitations. I have no doubt that the British Government is a powerful Government, but I have no doubt also that Satyagraha is a sovereign remedy.'

The clever Secretary sceptically nodded his head and said: 'We shall see.'

4. SHANTINIKETAN

From Rajkot I proceeded to Shantiniketan. The teachers and students overwhelmed me with affection. The reception was a beautiful

combination of simplicity, art and love. It was here I met Kakasaheb Kalelkar for the first time.

I did not know then why Kalelkar was called 'Kakasaheb'. But I learnt later on that Sjt. Keshavrao Deshpande, who was a contemporary and a close friend of mine in England, and who had conducted a school in the Baroda State called 'Ganganath Vidyalaya', had given the teachers family names with a view to investing the Vidyalaya with a family atmosphere. Sjt. Kalelkar who was a teacher there came to be called, 'Kaka' (lit. paternal uncle). Phadke was called 'Mama' (lit. maternal uncle), and Harihar Sharma received the name 'Anna' (lit. brother). Others also got similar names. Anandanand (Swami) as Kaka's friend and Patwardhan (Appa) as Mama's friend later joined the family, and all in course of time became my co-workers one after another. Sjt. Deshpande himself used to be called 'Saheb'. When the Vidyalaya had to be dissolved, the family also broke up, but they never gave up their spiritual relationship or their assumed names.

Kakasaheb went out to gain experience of different institutions, and at the time I went to Shantiniketan, he happened to be there. Chintaman Shastri, belonging to the same fraternity, was there also. Both helped in teaching Sanskrit.

The Phoenix family had been assigned separate quarters at Shantiniketan. Maganlal Gandhi was at their head, and he had made it his business to see that all the rules of the Phoenix Ashram should be scrupulously observed. I saw that, by dint his fragrance felt in the whole of Shantiniketan.

Andrews was there, and also Pearson. Amongst the Bengali teachers with whom we came in fairly close contact were Jagadanandbabu, Nepalbabu, Santoshbabu, Kshitimohanbabu, Nagenbabu, Sharadbabu and Kalibabu.

As is my wont, I quickly mixed with the teachers and students, and engaged them in a discussion on self-help. I put it to the teachers that, if they and the boys dispensed with the services of paid cooks and cooked their food themselves, it would enable the teachers to control the kitchen from the point of view of the boy's physical and moral health, and it would afford to the students an object-lesson in self-help. One or two of them were inclined to shake their heads. Some of them strongly approved of the proposal. The boys welcomed it, if only because of their instinctive taste for novelty. So we launched the experiment. When I invited the Poet to express his opinion, he said that he did not mind it provided the

teachers were favourable. To the boys he said, 'The experiment contains the key to Swaraj.'

Pearson began to wear away his body in making the experiment a success. He threw himself into it with zest. A batch was formed to cut vegetables, another to clean the grain, and so on. Nagenbabu and others undertook to see to the sanitary cleaning of the kitchen and its surroundings. It was a delight to me to see them working spade in hand.

But it was too much to expect the hundred and twenty-five boys with their teachers to take to this work of physical labour like ducks to water. There used to be daily discussion. Some began early to show fatigue. But Pearson was not the man to be tired. One would always find him with his smiling face doing something or other in or about the kitchen. He had taken upon himself the cleaning of the bigger utensils. A party of students played on their sitar before this cleaning party in order to beguile the tedium of the operation. All alike took the thing up with zest and Shantiniketan became a busy hive.

Changes like these when once begun always develop. Not only was the Phoenix party's kitchen self-conducted, but the food cooked in it was of the simplest. Condiments were eschewed. Rice, dal, vegetables and even wheat flour were all cooked at one and the same time in a kitchen with a view to introducing reform in the Bengali kitchen. One or two teachers and some students ran this kitchen.

The experiment was, however, dropped after some time. I am opinion that the famous institution lost nothing by having conducted the experiment for a brief interval, and some of the experiences gained could not but be of help to the teachers.

I had intended to stay at Shantiniketan for some time but fate willed otherwise. I had hardly been there a week when I received from Poona a telegram announcing Gokhale's death. Shantiniketan was immersed in grief. All the members came over to me to express their condolences. A special meeting was called in the Ashram temple to mourn the national loss. It was a solemn function. The same day I left for Poona with my wife and Maganlal. All the rest stayed at Shantiniketan.

Andrews accompanied me up to Burdwan. 'Do you think,' he asked me, 'that a time will come for Satyagraha in India? And if so, have you any idea when it will come?'

'It is difficult to say,' said I. 'For one year I am to do nothing. For Gokhale took from me a promise that I should travel in India for gaining experience, and express no opinion on public question until I have finished the period of probation. Even after the year is over, I will be in no hurry

to speak and pronounce opinions. And so I do not suppose there will be any occasion for Satyagraha for five years or so.'

I may note in this connection that Gokhale used to laugh at some of my ideas in Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule and say: 'After you have stayed a year in India, your views will correct themselves.'

5. WOES OF THIRD CLASS PASSENGERS

At Burdwan we came face to face with the hardships that a third class passenger has to go through even in securing his ticket. 'Third class tickets are not booked so early,' we were told. I went to the Station Master, though that too was a difficult business. Someone kindly directed me to where he was, and I represented to him our difficulty. He also made the same reply. As soon as the booking window opened, I went to purchase the tickets. But it was no easy thing to get them. Might was right, and passengers, who were forward and indifferent to others, coming one after another, continued to push me out. I was therefore about the last of the first crowd to get a ticket.

The train arrived, and getting into it was another trial. There was a free exchange of abuse and pushes between passengers already in the train and those trying to get in. We ran up and down the platform, but were everywhere met with the same reply: 'No room here.' I went to the guard. He said, 'You must try to get in where you can or take the next train.'

'But I have urgent business,' I respectfully replied. He had no time to listen to me. I was disconcerted. I told Maganlal to get in wherever possible, and I got into an inter-class compartment with my wife. The guard saw us getting in. At Asansol station he came to charge us excess fares. I said to him:

'It was your duty to find us room. We could not get any, and so we are sitting here. If you can accommodate us in a third class compartment, we shall be only too glad to go there.'

'You may not argue with me,' said the guard. 'I cannot accommodate you. You must pay the excess fare, or get out.'

I wanted to reach Poona somehow. I was not therefore prepared to fight the guard. so I paid the excess fare he demanded, i.e., up to Poona. But I resented the injustice.

In the morning we reached Mogalsarai. Maganlal had managed to get a seat in the third class, to which I now and asked him to give me a certificate to the effect that I had shifted to a third class compartment at

Mogalsarai. This he declined to do. I applied to the railway authorities for redress, and got a reply to this effect: 'It is not our practice to refund excess fares without the production of a certificate, but we make an exception in your case. It is not possible, however, to refund the excess fare from Burdwan to Mogalsarai.'

Since this I have had experiences of third class travelling which, if I wrote them all down, would easily fill a volume. But I can only touch on them causally in these chapters. It has been and always will be my profound regret that physical incapacity should have compelled me to give up third class travelling.

The woes of third class passengers are undoubtedly due to the high-handedness of railway authorities. But the rudeness, dirty habits, selfishness and ignorance of the passengers themselves are no less to blame. The pity is that they often do not realize that they are behaving ill, dirtily or selfishly. They believe that everything they do is in the natural way. All this may be traced to the indifference towards them of us 'educated' people.

We reached Kalyan dead tired. Maganlal and I got some water from the station water-pipe and had our bath. As I was proceeding to arrange for my wife's bath, Sjt Kaul of the Servants of India Society recognizing us came up. He too was going to Poona. He offered to take my wife to the second class bath room. I hesitated to accept the courteous offer. I knew that my wife had no right to avail herself of the second class bathroom, But I ultimately connived at the impropriety. This, I know, does not become a votary of truth. Not that my wife was eager to use the bath room, but a husband's partiality for his wife got the better of his partiality for truth. The face of truth is hidden behind the golden veil of *maya*, says the Upanishad.

6. WOOING

On arrival in Poona, we found ourselves, after the performance of the *shradha* ceremonies, discussing the future of the Society, and the question as to whether I should join it or not. This question of membership proved a very delicate matter for me to handle. Whilst Gokhale was there I did not have to seek admission as a member. I had simply to obey his wish, a position I loved to be in. Launching on the stormy sea of Indian public life, I was in need of a sure pilot. I had one in Gokhale and had felt secure in his keeping. Now that he was gone, I was thrown on my own resources, and I felt that it was my duty to seek admission. That, I thought,

would please Gokhale's spirit. So, without hesitation and with firmness, I began the wooing.

Most of the members of the Society were in Poona at this juncture. I set about pleading with them and tried to dispel their fears about me. But I saw that they were divided. One section favoured my admission, the other was strongly against it. I knew that neither yielded to the other in its affection for me, but possibly their loyalty to the Society was greater, at any rate not less than their love for me. All our discussions were therefore free from bitterness, and strictly confined to matters of principle. The section that was opposed to me held that they and I were as the poles asunder in various vital matters, and they felt my membership was likely to imperil the very objects for which the Society was founded. This naturally was more than they could bear.

We dispersed after prolonged discussions, the final decision being postponed to a later date.

I was considerably agitated as I returned home. Was it right for me to be admitted by a majority vote? Would it be consonant with my loyalty to Gokhale? I saw clearly that, when there was such a sharp division amongst the members of the Society over admitting me, by far the best course for me was to withdraw my application for admission and save those opposed to me from a delicate situation. Therein I thought lay my loyalty to the Society and Gokhale. The decision came to me in a flash, and immediately I wrote to Mr. Shastri asking him not to have the adjourned meeting at all. Those who had opposed my application fully appreciated the decision. It saved them from an awkward position and bound us in closer bonds of friendship. The withdrawal of my application made me truly a member of the Society.

Experience now tell me that it was well that I did not formally become a member, and that the opposition of those who had been against me was justified. Experience has shown too that our views on matters of principle were widely divergent. But the recognition of the differences has meant to estrangement or bitterness between us. We have remained as brothers, and the Society's Poona home has always been for me a place of pilgrimage.

It is true that I did not officially become a member of the Society, but I have ever been a member in spirit. Spiritual relationship is far more precious than Physical relationship divorced from spiritual is body without soul.

7. KUMBHA MELA

I next went to Rangoon to meet Dr. Mehta, and on my way I halted at Calcutta. I was the guest of the late Babu Bhupendranath Basu. Bengali hospitality reached its climax here. In those days I was a strict fruitarian, so all the fruits and nuts available in Calcutta were ordered for me. The ladies of the house kept awake all night skinning various nuts. Every possible care was taken in dressing fresh fruit in the Indian style. Numerous delicacies were prepared for my companions, amongst whom was my son Ramdas. Much as I could appreciate this affectionate hospitality, I could not bear the thought of a whole household being occupied in entertaining two or three guests. But as yet I saw no escape from such embarrassing attentions.

On the boat going to Rangoon I was a deck passenger. If excess of attention embarrassed us in Sjt. Basu's house, grossest inattention, even to the elementary comforts of deck passengers, was our lot on the boat. What was an apology for a bath room was unbearably dirty, the latrines were stinking sinks. To use the latrine one had to wade through urine and excreta or jump over them.

This was more than flesh and blood could bear. I approached the Chief Officer without avail. If anything was lacking to complete the picture of stink and filth, the passengers furnished it by their thoughtless habits. They spat where they sat, dirtied the surroundings with the leavings of their food, tobacco and betel leaves. There was no end to the noise, and everyone tried to monopolise as much room as possible. Their luggage took up more room than they. We had thus two days of the severest trial.

On reaching Rangoon I wrote to the Agent of the Steamship Company, acquainting him with all the facts. Thanks to this letter and to Dr. Mehta's efforts in the matter, the return journey though on deck was less unbearable.

In Rangoon my fruitarian diet was again a source of additional trouble to the host. But since Dr. Mehta's home was as good as my own, I could control somewhat the lavishness of the menu. However, as I had not set any limit to the number of articles I might eat, the palate and the eyes refused to put an effective check on the supply of varieties ordered. There were no regular hours for meals. Personally I preferred having the last meal before night fall. Nevertheless as a rule it could not be had before eight or nine.

This year 1915 was the year of the Kumbha fair, which is held at Hardvar once every 12 years. I was by no means eager to attend the fair, but I was anxious to meet Mahatma Munshiramji who was in his Gurukul.

Gokhale's Society had sent a big volunteer corps for service at the Kumbha. Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru was at the head, and the late Dr. Dev was the medical officer. I was invited to send the Phoenix party to assist them, and so Maganlal Gandhi had already preceded me. On my return from Rangoon, I joined the band.

The journey from Calcutta to Hardvar was particularly trying. Sometimes the compartments had no lights. From Saharanpur we were huddled into carriages for goods or cattle. These had no roofs, and what with the blazing midday sun overhead and the scorching iron floor beneath, we were all but roasted. The pangs of thirst, caused by even such a journey as this, could not persuade orthodox Hindus to take water, if it was 'Musalmani.' They waited until they could get the 'Hindu' water. These very Hindus, let it be noted, do not so much as hesitate or inquire when during illness the doctor administers them wine or prescribes beef tea or a Musalman or Christian compounder gives them water.

Our stay in Shantiniketan had taught us that the scavenger's work would be our special function in India. Now for the volunteers in Hardvar tents had been pitched in a *dharmashala*, and Dr. Dev had dug some pits to be used as latrines. He had to depend on paid scavengers for looking after these. Here was work for the Phoenix party. We offered to cover up the excreta with earth and to see to their disposal, and Dr. Dev gladly accepted our offer. The offer was naturally made by me, but it was Maganlal Gandhi who had to execute it. My business was mostly to keep sitting in the tent giving *darshan* and holding religious and other discussions with numerous pilgrims who called on me. This left me not a minute which I could call my own. I was followed even to the bathing *ghat* by these *darshan-seekers*, nor did they leave me alone whilst I was having my meals. Thus it was in Hardvar that I realized what a deep impression my humble services in South Africa had made throughout the whole of India.

But this was no enviable position to be in. I felt as though I was between the devil and the deep sea. Where no one recognized me, I had to put up with the hardships that fall to the lot of the millions in this land, e.g., in railway travelling. Where I was surrounded by people who had heard of me I was the victim of their craze for *darshan*. Which of the two conditions was more pitiable, I have often been at a loss to determine. That at least I know that the *darshan-valas'* blind love has often made me angry, and more often sore at heart. Whereas travelling, though often trying, has been uplifting and has hardly ever roused me to anger.

I was in those days strong enough to roam about a lot, and was fortunately not so known as not to be able to go in the streets without creating much fuss. During these roamings I came to observe more of the pilgrims' absent mindedness, hypocrisy and slovenliness, than of their piety. The swarm of sadhus, who had descended there, seemed to have been born but to enjoy the good things of life.

Here I saw a cow with five feet! I was astonished, but knowing men soon disillusioned me. The poor five-footed cow was a sacrifice to the greed of the wicked. I learnt that the fifth foot was nothing else but a foot cut off from a live calf and grafted upon the shoulder of the cow! The result of this double cruelty was exploited to fleece the ignorant of their money. There was no Hindu but would be attracted by a five-footed cow, and no Hindu but would lavish his charity on such a miraculous cow.

The day of the fair was now upon us. It proved a redletter day for me. I had not gone to Hardvar with the sentiments of a pilgrim. I have never thought of frequenting places of pilgrimage in search of piety. But the seventeen lakhs of men that were reported to be there could not all be hypocrites or mere sight-seers. I had no doubt that countless people amongst them had gone there to earn merit and for self-purification. It is difficult, if not impossible, to say to what extent this kind of faith uplifts the soul.

I therefore passed the whole night immersed in deep thought. There were those pious souls in the midst of the hypocrisy that surrounded them. They would be free of guilt before their Maker. If the visit to Hardvar was in itself a sin, I must publicly protest against it, and leave Hardvar on the day Kumbha. If the pilgrimage to Hardvar and to the Kumbha fair was not sinful, I must impose some act of self-denial on myself in atonement for the iniquity prevailing there and purify myself. This was quite natural for me. My life is based on disciplinary resolutions. I thought of the unnecessary trouble I had caused to my hosts at Calcutta and Rangoon, who had so lavishly entertained me. I therefore decided to limit the articles of my daily diet and to have my final meal before sunset. I was convinced that, if I did not impose these restrictions on myself, I should put my future hosts to considerable inconvenience and should engage them in serving me rather than engage myself in service. So I pledged myself never whilst in India to take more than five articles in twenty-four hours, and never to eat after dark. I gave the fullest thought to the difficulties I might have to face. But I wanted to leave no loophole. I rehearsed to myself what would happen during an illness, if I counted medicine among the five articles, and made no exception in favour of

special articles of diet. I finally decided that there should be no exception on any account whatsoever.

I have been under these vows for now thirteen years. They have subjected me to a severe test, but I am able to testify that they have also served as my shield. I am of opinion that they have added a few years to my life and saved me from many an illness.

8. LAKSHMAN JHULA

It was a positive relief to reach the Gurukul and meet Mahatma Munshiramji with his giant frame. I at once felt the wonderful contrast between the peace of the Gurukul and the din and noise of Hardvar.

The Mahatma overwhelmed me with affection. The Brahmacharis were all attention. It was here that I was first introduced to Acharya Ramadevji, and I could immediately see what a force and a power he must be. We had different viewpoints in several matters, nevertheless our acquaintance soon ripened into friendship.

I had long discussions with Acharya Ramadevji and other professors about the necessity of introducing industrial training into the Gurukul. When the time came for going away it was a wrench to leave the place.

I had heard much in praise of the Lakshman Jhula (a hanging bridge over the Ganges) some distance from Hrishikesh, and many friends pressed me not to leave Hardvar without having gone as far as the bridge. I wanted to do this pilgrimage on foot and so I did it in two stages.

Many *sannyasis* called on me at Hrishikesh. One of them was particularly attracted towards me. The Phoenix party was there and their presence drew from the Swami many questions.

We had discussions about religion and he realized that I felt deeply about matters of religion. He saw me bareheaded and shirtless as I had returned from my bath in the Ganges. He was pained to miss the shikha (tuft of hair) on my head and the sacred thread about my neck and said:

‘It pains me to see you, a believing Hindu, going without a sacred thread and the shikha. These are the two external symbols of Hinduism and every Hindu ought to wear them.’

Now there is a history as to how I came to dispense with both. When I was an urchin of ten, I envied the Brahman lads sporting bunches of keys tied to their sacred threads, and I wished I could do likewise. The practice of wearing the sacred thread was not then common among the vaishya families in Kathiawad. But a movement had just been started for making it obligatory for the first three varnas. As a result several members

of the Gandhi clan adopted the sacred thread. The Brahman who was teaching two or three of us boys Ram Raksha invested us with the thread, and although I had no occasion to possess a bunch of keys, I got one and began to sport it. Later, when the thread gave way, I do not remember whether I missed it very much. But I know that I did not go in for a fresh one.

As I grew up several well-meaning attempts were made both in India and South Africa to re-invest me with the sacred thread, but with little success. If the shudras may not wear it, I argued, what right have the other varnas to do so? And I saw no adequate reason for adopting what was to me an unnecessary custom. I had no objection to the thread as such, but the reasons for wearing it were lacking.

As a vaishnava I had naturally worn round my neck the kanthi, and the shikha was considered obligatory by elders. On the eve of my going to England, however, I got rid of the shikha, lest when I was bareheaded it should expose me to ridicule and make me look, as I then thought, a barbarian in the eyes of the Englishmen. In fact this cowardly feeling carried me so far that in South Africa I got my cousin Chhaganlal Gandhi, who was religiously wearing the shikha, to do away with it. I feared that it might come in the way of his public work and so, even at the risk of paining him, I made him get rid of it.

I therefore made a clean breast of the whole matter to the Swami and said:

‘I will not wear the sacred thread, for I see no necessity for it, when countless Hindus can go without it and yet remain Hindus. Moreover, the sacred thread should be a symbol of spiritual regeneration, presupposing a deliberate attempt on the part of the wearer at a higher and purer life. I doubt whether in the present state of Hinduism and of India, Hindus can vindicate the right can come only after Hinduism has purged itself of untouchability, has removed all distinctions of superiority and inferiority, and shed a host of other evils and shams that have become rampant in it. My mind therefore rebels against the idea of wearing the sacred thread. But I am sure your suggestion about the *shikha* is worth considering. I once used to have it, and I discarded it from a false sense of shame. And so I feel that I should start growing it again. I shall discuss the matter with my comrades.’

The Swami did not appreciate my position with regard to the sacred thread. The very reasons that seemed to me to point to not wearing it appeared to him to favour its wearing. Even today my position remains about the same as it was at Hrishikesh. So long as there are different

religions, every one of them may need some outward distinctive symbol. But when the symbol is made into a fetish and an instrument of proving the superiority of one's religion over others', it is fit only to be discarded. The sacred thread does not appear to me today to be a means of uplifting Hinduism. I am therefore indifferent to it.

As for the shikha, cowardice having been the reason for discarding it, after consultation with friends I decided to re-grow it.

But to return to Lakshman Jhula. I was charmed with the natural scenery about Hrishikesh and the Lakshman Jhula, and bowed my head in reverence to our ancestors for their sense of the beautiful in Nature, and for their foresight in investing beautiful manifestations of Nature with a religious significance.

But the way in which men were using these beauty spots was far from giving me peace. As at Hardvar, so at Hrishikesh, people dirtied the roads and the fair banks of the Ganges. They did not even hesitate to desecrate the sacred water of the Ganges. It filled me with agony to see people performing natural functions on the thoroughfares and river banks, when they could easily have gone a little farther away from public haunts.

Lakshman Jhula was, I saw, nothing but an iron suspension bridge over the Ganges. I was told that originally there had been a fine rope-bridge. But a philan-thropic Marwadi got it into his head to destroy the rope-bridge and erect an iron one at a heavy cost and then entrusted the keys to the Government! I am at a loss to say anything about the rope-bridge as I have never seen it, but the iron bridge is entirely out of place in such surroundings and mars their beauty. The making over of the keys of this pilgrims' bridge to Government was too much even for my loyalty of those days.

The Svargashram which one reaches after crossing the bridge was a wretched place, being nothing but a number of shabby-looking sheds of galvanized iron sheets. These, I was told, were made for sadhakas (aspirants). There were hardly any living there at the moment. Those who were in the main building gave one an unfavourable impression.

But the Hardvar experiences proved for me to be of inestimable value. They helped me in no small way to decide where I was to live and what I was to do.

9. FOUNDING OF THE ASHRAM

The pilgrimage to the Kumbha fair was my second visit to Hardvar.

The Satyagraha Ashram was founded on the 25th of May, 1915. Sharddhanandji wanted me to settle in Hardvar. Some of my Calcutta

friends recommended Vaidyanathadham. Others strongly urged me to choose Rajkot. But when I happened to pass through Ahmedabad, many friends pressed me to settle down there, and they volunteered to find the expenses of the Ashram, as well as a house for us to live in.

I had a predilection for Ahmedabad. Being a Gujarati I thought I should be able to render the greatest service to the country through the Gujarati language. And then, as Ahmedabad was an ancient centre of handloom weaving, it was likely to be the most favourable field for the revival of the cottage industry of hand-spinning. There was also the hope that, the city being the capital of Gujarat, monetary help from its wealthy citizens would be more available here than elsewhere.

The question of untouchability was naturally among the subjects discussed with the Ahmedabad friends. I made it clear to them that I should take the first opportunity of admitting an untouchable candidate to the Ashram if he was otherwise worthy.

‘Where is the untouchable who satisfy your condition?’ said a vaishnava friend self-complacently.

I finally decided to found the Ashram at Ahmedabad.

So far as accommodation was concerned, Sjt. Jivanlal Desai, a barrister in Ahmedabad, was the principal man to help me. He offered to let, and we decided to hire, his Kochrab bungalow.

The first thing we had to settle was the name of the Ashram. I consulted friends. Amongst the names suggested were ‘Sevashram’ (the abode of service), ‘Tapovan’ (the abode of austrities), etc. I liked the name ‘Sevashram’ but for the absence of emphasis on the method of service. ‘Tapovan’ seemed to be a pretentious title, because though tapas was dear to us we would not presume to be tapasvins (men of austerity). Our creed was devotion to truth, and our business was the search for and insistence on truth. I wanted to acquaint India with the method I had tried in South Africa, and I desired to test in India the extent to which its application might be possible.

So my companions and I selected the name ‘Satyagraha Ashram,’ as conveying both goal and our method of service.

For the conduct of the Ashram a code of rules and observances was necessary. A draft was therefore prepared, and friends were invited to express their opinions on it. Amongst the many opinions that were received, that of Sir Gurudas Banerji is still in my memory. He liked the rules, but suggested that humility should be added as one of the observances, as he believed that the younger generation sadly lacked humility. Though I noticed this fault, I feared humility would cease to be

humility the moment it became a matter of vow. The true connotation of humility is self-effacement. Self-effacement is moksha (salvation), and whilst it cannot, by itself, be an observance, there may be other observances necessary for its attainment. If the acts of an aspirant after moksha or a servant have no humility or selflessness about them, there is no longing for moksha or service. Service without humility is selfishness and egotism.

There were at this time about thirteen Tamilians in our party. Five Tamil youngsters had accompanied me from South Africa, and the rest came from different parts of the country. We were in all about twenty-five men and women.

This is how the Ashram started. All had their meals in a common kitchen and strove to live as one family.

10. ON THE ANVIL

The Ashram had been in existence only a few months when we were put to a test such as I had scarcely expected. I received a letter from Amritlal Thakkar to this effect: 'A humble and honest untouchable family is desirous of joining your Ashram. Will you accept them?'

I was perturbed. I had never expected that an untouchable family with an introduction from no less a man than Thakkar Bapa would so soon be seeking admission to the Ashram. I shared the letter with my companions. They welcomed it.

I wrote to Amritlal Thakkar expressing our willingness to accept the family, provided all the members were ready to abide by the rules of the Ashram.

The family consisted of Dudabhai, his wife Danibehn and their daughter Lakshmi, then a mere toddling babe. Dudabhai had been a teacher in Bombay. They all agreed to abide by the rules and were accepted.

But their admission created a flutter amongst the friends who had been helping the Ashram. The very first difficulty was found with regard to the use of the well, which was partly controlled by the owner of the bungalows. The man in charge of the water-lift objected that drops of water from our bucket would pollute him. So he took to swearing at us and molesting Dudabhai. I told everyone to put up with the abuse and continue drawing water at any cost. When he saw that we did not return his abuse, the man became ashamed and ceased to bother us.

All monetary help, however was stopped. The friend who had asked that question about an untouchable being able to follow the rules of the Ashram had never expected that any such would be forthcoming.

With the stopping of monetary help came rumours of proposed social boycott. We were prepared for all this. I had told my companions that, if we were boycotted and denied the usual facilities, we would not leave Ahmedabad. We would rather go and stay in the untouchables' quarter and live on whatever we could get by manual labour.

Matters came to such a pass that Maganlal Gandhi one day gave me this notice: 'We are out of funds and there is nothing for the next month.'

I quietly replied: 'Then we shall go to the untouchables' quarter.'

This was not the first time I had been faced with such a trial. On all such occasions God has sent help at the last moment. One morning, shortly after Maganlal had given me warning of our monetary plight, one of the children came and said that a Sheth who was waiting in a car outside wanted to see me. I went out to him. 'I want to give the Ashram some help,' said I. 'And I confess I am at the present moment at the end of my resources.'

'I shall come tomorrow at this time,' he said. 'Will you be here?'

'Yes,' said I, and he left.

Next day, exactly at the appointed hour, the car drew up near our quarters, and the horn was blown. The children came with the news. The Sheth did not come in. I went out to see him. He placed in my hands currency notes of the value of Rs. 13,000, and drove away.

I had never expected this help, and what a novel way of rendering it! The gentleman had never before visited the Ashram. So far as I can remember, I had met him only once. No visit, no enquiries, simply rendering help and going away! This was a unique experience for me. The help deferred the exodus to the untouchables' quarter. We now felt quite safe for a year.

Just as there was a storm outside so was there a storm in the Ashram itself. Though in South Africa untouchable friends used to come to my place and live and feed with me, my wife and other women did not seem quite to relish the admission into the Ashram of the untouchable friends. My eyes and ears easily detected their indifference, if not their dislike, towards Danibehn. The monetary difficulty had caused me no anxiety, but this internal storm was more than I could bear. Danibehn was an ordinary woman. Dudabhai was a man with slight education but of good understanding. I liked his patience. Sometimes he did flare up, but on the whole I was well impressed with his forbearance. I pleaded with him to swallow minor insults. He not only agreed, but prevailed upon his wife to do likewise.

The admission of this family proved a valuable lesson to the Ashram. In the very beginning we proclaimed to the world that the Ashram would not countenance untouchability. Those who wanted to help the Ashram were thus put on their guard, and the work of the Ashram in this direction was considerably simplified. The fact that it is mostly the real orthodox Hindus who have met the daily growing expenses of the Ashram is perhaps a clear indication that untouchability is shaken to its foundation. There are indeed many other proofs of this, but the fact that good Hindus do not scruple to help an Ashram where we go the length of dining with the untouchables is no small proof.

I am sorry that I should have to skip over quite a number of things pertaining to this subject, how we tackled delicate questions arising out of the main question, how we had to overcome some unexpected difficulties, and various other matters which are quite relevant to a description of experiments with Truth. The chapters that follow will also suffer from the same drawback. I shall have to omit important details, because most of the characters in the drama are still alive, and it is not proper without permission to use their names in connection with events with which they are concerned. It is hardly practicable to obtain their consent or to get them every now and then to revise the chapters concerning themselves. Besides such procedure is outside the limit of this autobiography. I therefore fear that the rest of the story, valuable as it in my opinion to seekers after Truth, will be told with inevitable omissions. Nevertheless, it is my desire and hope, God willing, to bring this narrative down to the days of non-co-operation.

11. ABOLITION OF INDENTURED EMIGRATION

We shall, for a moment, take leave of the Ashram, which in the very beginning had to weather internal and external storms, and briefly advert to a matter that engaged my attention.

Indentured labourers were those who had emigrated from India to labour under an indenture for five years or less. Under the Smuts-Gandhi settlement of 1914, the £3 tax in respect of the indentured emigrants to Natal had been abolished, but the general emigration from India still needed treatment.

In March 1916 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council for the abolition of the indenture system. In accepting the motion Lord Hardinge announced that he had 'obtained from His Majesty's Government the promise of the abolition

in due course of the system. I felt however, that India could not be satisfied with so very vague an assurance, but ought to agitate for immediate abolition. India had tolerated the system through her sheer negligence, and I believed the time had come when people could successfully agitate for this redress. I met some of the leaders, wrote in the press, and saw that public opinion was solidly in favour of immediate abolition. Might this be a fit subject for Satyagraha? I had no doubt that it was, but I did not know the *modus operandi*.

In the meantime the Viceroy had made no secret of the meaning of 'the eventual abolition', which, as he said, was abolition 'within such reasonable time as will allow of alternative arrangements introduced.'

So in February 1917, Pandit Malaviyaji asked for leave to introduce a bill for the immediate abolition of the system. Lord Chelmsford refused permission. It was time for me to tour the country for an all-India agitation.

Before I started the agitation I thought it proper to wait upon the Viceroy. So I applied for an interview. He immediately granted it. Mr. Maffey, now Sir John Maffey, was his private secretary. I came in close contact with him. I had a satisfactory talk with Lord Chelmsford who, without being definite, promised to be a helpful.

I began my tour from Bombay. Mr. Jehangir Petit undertook to convene the meeting under the auspices of the Imperial Citizenship Association. The Executive Committee of the Association met first for framing the resolutions to be moved at the meeting. Dr. Stanley Reed, Sjt. (now Sir) Lallubhai Samaldas, Sjt. Natarajan and Mr. Petit were present at the Committee meeting. The discussion centred round the fixing of the period within which the Government was to be asked to abolish the system. There were three proposals, viz, for abolition 'as soon as possible,' abolition 'by the 31st July,' and 'immediate abolition.' I was for a definite date, as we could then decide what to do if the Government failed to accede to our request within the time limit. Sjt. Lallubhai was for 'immediate' abolition. He said 'immediate' indicated a shorter period than the 31st July. I explained that the people would not understand the word 'immediate'. If we wanted to get them to do something, they must have a more definite word. Everyone would interpret 'immediate' in his own way, Government one way, the people another way. There was no question of misunderstanding 'the 31st of July,' and if nothing was done by that date, we could proceed further. Dr. Reed saw the force of the argument, and ultimately Sjt. Lallubhai also agreed. We adopted the 31st July as the latest date by which the abolition should be announced, a

resolution to that effect was passed at the public meeting, and meetings throughout India resolved accordingly.

Mrs. Jaiji Petit put all her energies into the organization of a ladies' deputation to the Viceroy. Amongst the ladies from Bombay who formed the deputation, I remember the names of Lady Tata and the late Dilshad Begam. The deputation had a great effect. The Viceroy gave an encouraging reply.

I visited Karachi, Calcutta and various other places. There were fine meetings everywhere, and there was unbounded enthusiasm. I had not expected anything like it when the agitation was launched.

In those days I used to travel alone, and had therefore wonderful experiences. C. I. D. men were always after me. But as I had nothing to conceal, they did not molest me, nor did I cause them any trouble. Fortunately I had not then received the stamp of Mahatmaship, though the shout of that name was quite common where people knew me.

On one occasion the detectives disturbed me at several stations, asked for my ticket and took down the number. I, of course, readily replied to all questions they asked. My fellow passengers had taken me to be a 'sadhu' or a 'fakir'. When they saw that I was being molested at every station, they were exasperated and swore at the detectives. 'Why are you worrying the poor sadhu for nothing?' they protested. 'Don't you show these scoundrels your ticket,' they said, addressing me.

I said to them gently: 'It is no trouble to show them my ticket. They are doing their duty.' The passengers were not satisfied, they evinced more and more sympathy, and strongly objected to this sort of ill-treatment of innocent men.

But the detectives were nothing. The real hardship was the third class travelling. My bitterest experience was from Lahore to Delhi. I was going to Calcutta from Karachi via Lahore where I had to change trains. It was full, and those who could get in did so by sheer force, often sneaking through windows if the doors were locked. I had to reach Calcutta on the date fixed for the meeting, and if I missed this train I could not arrive in time. I had almost given up hope of getting in. No one was willing to accept me, when porter discovering my plight came to me and said, 'Give me twelve annas and I'll get you a seat.' 'Yes,' said I, 'you shall have twelve annas if you do procure me a seat.' The young man went from carriage to carriage entreating passengers but no one heeded him. As the train was about to start, some passengers said, 'There is no room here, but you can shove him in if you like. He will have to stand.' 'Well?' asked

the young porter. I readily agreed, and he shoved me in bodily through the window. Thus I got in and the porter earned his twelve annas.

The night was a trial. The other passengers were sitting somehow. I stood two hours, holding the chain of the upper bunk. Meanwhile some of the passengers kept worrying me incessantly. 'Why will you not sit down?' they asked. I tried to reason with them saying there was no room, but they could not tolerate my standing, though they were lying full length on the upper bunks. They did not tire of worrying me neither did I tire of gently replying to them. This at last mollified them. Some of them asked me my name, and made room for me. Patience was thus rewarded. I was dead tired, and my head was reeling. God sent help just when it was most needed.

In that way I somehow reached Delhi and thence Calcutta. The Maharaja of Cassimbazar, the president of the Calcutta meeting, was my host. Just as in Karachi, here also there was unbounded enthusiasm. The meeting was attended by several Englishmen.

Before the 31st July the Government announced that indentured emigration from India was stopped.

It was in 1894 that I drafted the first petition protesting against the system, and I had then hoped that this 'semi-slavery,' as Sir W. W. Hunter used to call the system, would some day be brought to an end.

There were many who aided in the agitation which was started in 1894, but I cannot help saying that potential Satyagraha hastened the end.

For further details of that agitation and of those who took part in it, I refer the reader to my Satyagraha in South Africa.

12. THE STAIN OF INDIGO

Champan is the land of King Janaka. Just as it abounds in mango groves, so used it to be full of indigo plantations until the year 1917. The Champan tenant was bound by law to plant three out of every twenty parts of his land with indigo for his landlord. This system was known as the *tinkathis* system, as three *kathas* out of twenty (which make one acre) had to be planted with indigo.

I must confess that I did not then know even the name, much less the geographical position, of Champan, and I had hardly any notion of indigo plantations. I had seen packets of indigo, but little dreamed that it was grown and manufactured in Champan at great hardship to thousands of agriculturists.

Rajkumar Shukla was one of the agriculturists who had been under this harrow, and he was filled with a passion to wash away the stain of indigo for the thousands who were suffering as he had suffered.

This man caught hold of me at Lucknow, where I had gone for the Congress of 1918. 'Vakil Babu will tell you everything about our distress,' he said, and urged me to go to Champaran. 'Vakil Babu' was none other than Babu Brajkishore Prasad, who became my esteemed co-worker in Champaran, and who is the soul of public work in Bihar. Rajkumar Shukla brought him to my tent. He was dressed in a black alpaca *achkan* and trousers. Brijkishore Babu failed then to make an impression on me. I took it that he must be some vakil exploiting the simple agriculturists. Having heard from him something of Champaran, I replied as was my wont: 'I can give no opinion without seeing the condition with my own eyes. You will please move the resolution in the Congress, but leave me free for the present.' Rajkumar Shukla of course wanted some help from the Congress. Babu Brajkishore Prasad moved the resolution, expressing sympathy for the people of Champaran, and it was unanimously passed.

Rajkumar Shukla was glad, but far from satisfied. He wanted me personally to visit Champaran and witness the miseries of the ryots there. I told him that I would include Champaran in the tour which I had contemplated and give it a day or two. 'One day will be enough,' said he, 'and you will see things with your own eyes.'

From Lucknow I went to Cawnpore Rajkumar Shukla followed me there. 'Champaran is very near here. Please give a day,' he insisted. 'Pray excuse me this time. But I promise that I will come,' said I, further committing myself.

I returned to the Ashram. The ubiquitous Rajkumar was there too. 'Pray fix the day now,' he said. 'Well,' said I, 'I have to be in Calcutta on such and such a date, come and meet me then, and take me from there.' I did not know where I was to go, what to do, what things to see.

Before I reached Bhupen Babu's place in Calcutta, Rajkumar Shukla had gone and established himself there. Thus this ignorant, unsophisticated but resolute agriculturist captured me.

So early in 1917, we left Calcutta for Champaran, looking just like fellow rustics. I did not even know the train. He took me to it, and we travelled together, reaching Patna in the morning.

This was my first visit to Patna. I had no friend or acquaintance with whom I could think of putting up. I had an idea that Rajkumar Shukla, simple agriculturist as he was, must have some influence in Patna. I had come to know him a little more on the journey, and on reaching Patna I

had no illusions left concerning him. He was perfectly innocent of every thing. The vakils that he had taken to be his friends were really nothing of the sort. Poor Rajkumar was more or less as a menial to them. Between such agriculturist clients and their vakils there is a gulf as wide as the Ganges in flood.

Rajkumar Shukla took me to Rajendra Babu's place in Patna. Rajendra Babu had gone to Puri or some other place, I now forget which. There were one or two servants at the bungalow who paid us no attention. I had with me something to eat. I wanted dates which my companion procured for me from the bazaar.

There was strict untouchability in Bihar. I might not draw water at the well whilst the servants were using it, lest drops of water from my bucket might pollute them, the servants not knowing to what caste I belonged. Rajkumar directed me to the indoor latrine, the servant promptly directed me to the outdoor one. All this was far from surprising or irritating to me, for I was inured to such things. The servants were doing the duty, which they thought Rajendra Babu would wish them to do.

These entertaining experiences enhanced my regard for Rajkumar Shukla, if they also enabled me to know him better. I saw now that Rajkumar Shukla could not guide me, and that I must take the reins in my own hands.

13. THE GENTLE BIHARI

I knew Maulana Mazharul Haq in London when he was studying for the bar, and when I met him at the Bombay Congress in 1915 the year in which he was President of the Muslim League he had renewed the acquaintance, and extended me an invitation to stay with him whenever I happened to go to Patna. I bethought myself of this invitation and sent him a note indicating the purpose of my visit. He immediately came in his car, and pressed me to accept his hospitality. I thanked him and requested him to guide me to my destination by the first available train, the railway guide being useless to an utter stranger like me. He had a talk with Rajkumar Shukla and suggested that I should first go to Muzaffarpur. There was a train for that place the same evening and he sent me off by it.

Principal Kripalani was then in Muzaffarpur. I had known of him ever since my visit to Hyderabad. Dr. Choitharam had told me of his great sacrifice, of his simple life, and of the Ashram that Dr. Choitharam was running out of funds provided by Prof. Kripalani. He used to be a

professor in the Government College, Muzaffarpur, and had just resigned the post when I went there. I had sent a telegram informing him of my arrival, and he met me at the station with a crowd of students, though the train reached there at midnight. He had no rooms of his own, and was staying with Professor Malkani who therefore virtually became my host. It was an extraordinary thing in those days for a Government professor to harbour a man like me.

Professor Kripalani spoke to me about the desperate condition of Bihar, particularly of the Tirhut division and gave me an idea of the difficulty of my task. He had established very close contact with the Biharis, and had already spoken to them about the mission that took me to Bihar.

In the morning a small group of vakils called on me. I still remember Ramnavmi Prasad among them, as his earnestness specially appealed to me.

‘It is not possible,’ he said, ‘for you to do the kind of work you have come for, if you stay here (meaning Prof. Malkani’s quarters). You must come and stay with one of us. Gaya Babu is a well-known wakil here. I have come on his behalf to invite you to stay with him. I confess we are all afraid of Government, but we shall render what help we can. Most of the things Rajkumar Shukla has told you are true. It is a pity our leaders are not here today. I have, however, wired to them both, Bapu Brajkishore Prasad and Babu Rajendra Prasad. I expect them to arrive shortly, and they are sure to be able to give you all the information you want and to help you considerably. Pray come over to Gaya Babu’s place.’

This was a request that I could not resist, though I hesitated for fear of embarrassing Gaya Babu. But he put me at ease, and so I went over to stay with him. He and his people showered all their affection on me.

Brajkishorebabu now arrived from Darbhanga and Rajendra Babu from Puri. Brajkishorebabu was not the Babu Brajkishore prasad I had met in Lucknow. He impressed me this time with his humility, simplicity, goodness and extraordinary faith, so characteristic of the Biharis, and my heart was joyous over it. The Bihar vakils’ regard for him was an agreeable surprise to me.

Soon I felt myself becoming bound to this circle of friends in lifelong friendship. Brajkishorebabu acquainted me with the facts of the case. He used to be in the habit of taking up the cases of the poor tenants. There were two such cases pending when I went there. When he won any such case, he consoled himself that he did not charge fees from these simple

peasants. Lawyers labour under the belief that, if they do not charge fees, they will have no wherewithal to run their households, and will not be able to render effective help to the poor people. The figures of the fees they charged and the standard of a barrister's fees in Bengal and Bihar staggered me.

'We gave Rs. 10,000 to so and so for his opinion,' I was told. Nothing less than four figures in any case.

The friends listened to my kindly reproach and did not misunderstand me.

'Having studied these cases,' said I, 'I have come to the conclusion that we should stop going to law courts. Taking such cases to the courts does little good. Where the ryots are so crushed and fear-stricken, law courts are useless. The real relief for them is to be free from fear. We cannot sit still until we have driven *tinkathia* out of Bihar. I had thought that I should be able to leave here in two days, but I now realize that the work might take even two years. I am prepared to give that time, if necessary. I am now feeling my ground, but I want your help.'

I found Brajkishorebabu exceptionally coolheaded. 'We shall render all the help we can,' he said quietly, 'but pray tell us what kind of help you will need.'

And thus we sat talking until midnight.

'I shall have little use for your legal knowledge,' I said to them. 'I want clerical assistance and help in interpretation. It may be necessary to face imprisonment, but, much so far as you feel yourselves capable of going. Even turning yourselves into clerks and giving up your profession for an indefinite period is no small thing. I find it difficult to understand the local dialect of Hindi, and I shall not be able to read papers written in Kaithi or Urdu. I shall want you to translate them for me. We cannot afford to pay for this work. It should all be done for love and out of a spirit of service.'

Brajkishorebabu understood this immediately, and he now cross-examined me and his companions by turns. He tried to ascertain the implications of all that I had said how long their service would be required, how many of them would be needed, whether they might serve by turns and so on. Then he asked the vakils the capacity of their sacrifice.

Ultimately they gave me this assurance. 'Such and such a number of us will do whatever you may ask. Some of us will be with you for so much time as you may require. The idea of accommodating oneself to imprisonment is a novel thing for us. We will try to assimilate it.'

14. FACE TO FACE WITH AHIMSA

My object was to inquire into the condition of the Champaran agriculturists and understand their grievances against the indigo planters. For this purpose it was necessary that I should meet thousands of the ryots. But I deemed it essential, before starting on my inquiry, to know the planters' side of the case and see the Commissioner of the Division. I sought and was granted appointments with both.

The Secretary of the Planters' Association told me plainly that I was an outsider and that I had no business to come between the planters and their tenants, but if I had any representation to make, I might submit it in writing. I politely told him that I did not regard myself as an outsider, and that I had every right to inquire into the condition of the tenants if they desired me to do so.

The Commissioner, on whom I called, proceeded to bully me, and advised me forthwith to leave Tirhut.

I acquainted my co-workers with all this, and told them that there was a likelihood of Government stopping me from proceeding further, and that I might have to go to jail earlier than I had expected, and that, if I was to be arrested, it would be best that the arrest should take place in Motihari or if possible in Bettiah. It was advisable, therefore, that I should go to those place as early as possible.

Champaran is a district of the Tirhut division and Motihari is its headquarters. Rajkumar Shukla's place was in the vicinity of Bettiah, and the tenants belonging to the *kothis* in its neighbourhood were the poorest in the district. Rajkumar Shukla wanted me to see them and I was equally anxious to do so.

So I started with my co-workers for Motihari the same day. Babu Gorakh Prasad harboured us in his home, which became a caravansera. It could hardly contain us all. The very same day we heard that about five miles from Motihari a tenant had been ill-treated. It was decided that, in company with Babu Dharanidhar Prasad, I should go and see him the next morning, and we accordingly set off for the place on elephant's back. An elephant, by the way, is about as common in Champaran as a bullock-cart in Gujarat. We had scarcely gone half when a messenger from the Police Superintendent overtook us and said that the latter had sent his compliments. I saw what he meant. Having left Dharanidharbabu to proceed to the original destination, I got into the hired carriage which the messenger had brought. He then served on me a notice to leave Champaran, and drove me to my place. On his asking me to acknowledge

the service of the notice, I wrote to the effect that I did not propose to comply with it and leave Champaran till my inquiry was finished. Thereupon I received a summons to take my trial the next day for disobeying the order to leave Champaran.

I kept awake that whole night writing letters and giving necessary instructions to Babu Brajkishore Prasad.

The news of the notice and the summons spread like wildfire, and I was told that Motihari that day witnessed unprecedented scenes. Gorakhababu's house and the court house overflowed with men. Fortunately I had finished all my work during the night and so was able to cope with the crowds. My companions proved the greatest help. They occupied themselves with regulating the crowds, for the latter followed me wherever I went.

A sort of friendliness sprang up between the officials Collector, Magistrate, Police Superintendent and myself. I might have legally resisted the notices served on me. Instead I accepted them all, and my conduct towards the officials was correct. They thus saw that I did not want to offend them personally, but that I wanted to offer civil resistance to their orders. In this way they were put at ease, and instead of harassing me they gladly availed themselves of my and my co-workers' co-operation in regulating the crowds. But it was an ocular demonstration to them of the fact that their authority was shaken. The people had for the moment lost all fear of punishment and yielded obedience to the power of love which their new friend exercised.

It should be remembered that no one knew me in Champaran. The peasants were all ignorant. Champaran, being far up north of the Ganges, and right at the foot of the Himalayas in close proximity to Nepal, was cut off from the rest of India. The Congress was practically unknown in those parts. Even those who had heard the name of the Congress shrank from joining it or even mentioning it. And now the Congress and its members had entered this land, though not in the name of the Congress, yet in a far more real sense.

In consultation with my co-workers I had decided that nothing should be done in the name of the Congress. What we wanted was work and not name, substance and not shadow. For the name of the Congress was the *bete noire* of the Government and their controllers the planters. To them the Congress was a byword for lawyers' wrangles, evasion of law through legal loopholes, a byword for bomb and anarchical crime and for diplomacy and hypocrisy. We had to disillusion them both. Therefore we had decided not to mention the name of the organization called the

Congress. It was enough, we thought, if they understood and followed the spirit of the Congress instead of its letter.

No emissaries had therefore been sent there, openly or secretly, on behalf of the Congress to prepare the ground for our arrival. Rajkumar Shukla was incapable of reaching the thousands of peasants. No political work had yet been done amongst them. The world outside Champaran was not known to them. And yet they received me as though we had been age-long friends. It is no exaggeration, but the literal truth, to say that in this meeting with the peasants I was face to face with God, Ahimsa and Truth.

When I come to examine my title to this realization, I find nothing but my love for the people. And this in turn is nothing but an expression of my unshakable faith in Ahimsa.

That day in Champaran was an unforgettable event in my life and a red-letter day for the peasants and for me.

According to the law, I was to be on my trial, but truly speaking Government was to be on its trial. The Commissioner only succeeded in trapping Government in the net which he had spread for me.

15. CASE WITHDRAWN

The trial began, The Government pleader, the Magistrate and other officials were on tenterhooks. They were at a loss to know what to do. The Government pleader was pressing the Magistrate to postpone the case. But I interfered and requested the Magistrate not to postpone the case, as I wanted to plead guilty to having disobeyed the order to leave Champaran and read a brief statement as follows:

‘With the permission of the Court I would like to make a brief statement showing why I have taken the very serious step of seemingly disobeying the order passed under section 144 of Cr. P.C. In my humble opinion it is a question of difference of opinion between the Local Administration and myself. I have entered the country with motives of rendering humanitarian and national service. I have done so in response to a pressing invitation to come and help the ryots, who urge they are not being fairly treated by the indigo planters. I could not render any help without studying the problem. I have, therefore, come to study it with the assistance, if possible, of the Administration and the planters. I have no other motive, and cannot believe that my coming can in any way disturb public peace and cause loss of life. I claim to have considerable experience in such matters. The Administration, however, have thought differently. I

fully appreciate their difficulty, and I admit too that they can only proceed upon information they received. As a law-abiding citizen my first instinct would be, as it was, to obey the order served upon me. But I could not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I have come. I feel that I could just now serve them only by remaining in their midst. I could not, therefore, voluntarily retire. Amid this conflict of duties I could only throw the responsibility of removing me from them on the Administration. I am fully conscious of the fact that a person, holding, in the public life of India, a position such as I do, has to be most careful in setting an example. It is my firm belief that in the complex constitution under which we are living, the only safe and honourable course for a self-respecting man is, in the circumstances such as face me, to do what I have decided to do, that is, to submit without protest to the penalty of disobedience.

‘I venture to make this statement not in any way in extenuation of the penalty to be awarded against me, but to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience.’

There was now no occasion to postpone the hearing, but as both the Magistrate and the Government pleader had been taken by surprise, the Magistrate postponed judgment. Meanwhile I had wired full details to the Viceroy, to Patna friends, as also to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and others.

Before I could appear before the Court to receive the sentence, the Magistrate sent a written message that the Lieutenant Governor had ordered the case against me to be withdrawn, and the Collector wrote to me saying that I was at liberty to conduct the proposed inquiry, and that I might at liberty to conduct the proposed inquiry, and that I might count on whatever help I needed from the officials. None of us was prepared for this prompt and happy issue.

I called on the Collector Mr. Heycock. He seemed to be a good man, anxious to do justice. He told me that I might ask for whatever papers I desired to see, and that I was at liberty to see him whenever I liked.

The country thus had its first direct object-lesson in Civil Disobedience. The affair was freely discussed both locally and in the press, and my inquiry got unexpected publicity.

It was necessary for my inquiry that the Government should remain neutral. But the inquiry did not need support from press reporters or leading articles in the press. Indeed the situation in Champaran was so delicate and difficult that over-energetic criticism or highly coloured

reports might damage the cause which I was seeking to espouse. So I wrote to the editors of the principal papers requesting them not to trouble to send any reporters, as I should send them whatever might be necessary for publication and keep them informed.

I knew that the Government attitude countenancing my presence had displeased the Champaran planters, and I know that even the officials, though they could say nothing openly, could hardly have liked it. Incorrect or misleading reports, therefore, were likely to incense them all the more, and their ire, instead of descending on me, would be sure to descend on the poor fear-stricken ryots and seriously hinder my search for the truth about the case.

In spite of these precautions the planters engineered against me a poisonous agitation. All sorts of falsehoods appeared in the press about my co-workers and myself. But my extreme cautiousness and my insistence on truth, even to the minutest detail, turned the edge of their sword.

The planters left no stone unturned in maligning Brajkishorebabu, but the more they maligned him, the more he rose in the estimation of the people.

In such a delicate situation as this I did not think it proper to invite any leaders from other provinces. Pandit Malaviyaji had sent me an assurance that, whenever I wanted him, I had only to send him word, but I did not trouble him. I thus prevented the struggle from assuming a political aspect. But I sent to the leaders and the principal papers occasional reports, not for publication, but merely for their information. I had seen that, even where the end might be political, but where the cause was non-political, one damaged it by giving it a political aspect and helped it by keeping it within its non-political limit. The Champaran struggle was a proof of the fact that disinterested service of the people in any sphere ultimately helps the country politically.

16. METHODS OF WORK

To give a full account of the Champaran inquiry would be to narrate the history, for the period, of the Champaran ryot, which is out of the question in these chapters. The Champaran inquiry was a bold experiment with Truth and Ahimsa, and I am giving week by week only what occurs to me as worth giving from that point of view. For more details the reader must turn to Sjt. Rajendra Prasad's history of the Champaran Satyagraha in Hindi, of which, I am told, an English edition is now in the press.

But to return to the subject matter of this chapter. The inquiry could not be conducted in Gorakhababu's house, without practically asking poor Gorakhababu to vacate it. And the people of Motihari had not yet shed their fear to the extent of renting a house to us. However, Brajkishorebabu tactfully secured one with considerable open space about it, and we now removed there.

It was not quite possible to carry on the work without money. It had not been the practice hitherto to appeal to the public for money for work of this kind. Brajkishorebabu and his friends were mainly vakils who either contributed funds themselves, or found it from friends whenever there was an occasion. How could they ask the people to pay when they and their kind could well afford to do so? That seemed to be the argument. I had made up my mind not to accept anything from the Champaran ryots. It would be bound to be misinterpreted. I was equally determined not to appeal to the country at large for funds to conduct this inquiry. For that was likely to give it an all-India and political aspect. Friends from Bombay offered Rs. 15,000, but I declined the offer with thanks. I decided to get as much as was possible, with Brajkishore babu's help, from well-to-do Biharis living outside Champaran and, if more was needed, to approach my friend Dr. P.J. Mehta of Rangoon. Dr. Mehta readily agreed to send me whatever might be needed. We were thus free from all anxiety on this score. We were not likely to require large funds, as we were bent on exercising the greatest economy in consonance with the poverty of need any large amount. I have an impression that we expended in all not more than three thousand rupees, and, as far as I remember, we saved a few hundred rupees from what we had collected.

The curious ways of living of my companions in the early days were a constant theme of raillery at their expense. Each of the vakils had a servant and a cook, and therefore a separate kitchen, and they often had their dinner as late as midnight. Though they paid their own expenses, their irregularity worried me, but as we had become close friends there was no possibility of a misunderstanding between us, and they received my ridicule in good part. Ultimately it was agreed that the servants should be dispensed with, that all the kitchens should be amalgamated, and that regular hours should be observed. As all were not vegetarians, and as two kitchens would have been expensive, a common vegetarian kitchen was decided upon. It was also felt necessary to insist on simple meals.

These arrangements considerably reduced the expenses and saved us a lot of time and energy, and both these were badly needed. Crowds of peasants came to make their statements, and they were followed by an

army of companions who filled the compound and garden to overflowing. The efforts of my companions to save me from *darshan* seekers were often of no avail, and I had to be exhibited for *darshan* at particular hours. At least five to seven volunteers were required to take down statements, and even then some people had to go away in the evening without being able to make their statements. All these statements were not essential, many of them being repetitions, but the people could not be satisfied otherwise, and I appreciated their feeling in the matter.

Those who took down the statements had to observe certain rules. Each peasant had to be closely cross-examined, and whoever failed to satisfy the test was rejected. This entailed a lot of extra time but most of the statements were thus rendered incontrovertible.

An officer from the C.I.D. would always be present when these statements were recorded. We might have prevented him, but we had decided from the very beginning not only not to mind the presence of C.I.D. officers, but to treat them with courtesy and to give them all the information that it was possible to give them. This was far from doing us any harm. On the contrary the very fact that the statements were taken down in the presence of the C.I.D. officers made the peasants more fearless. Whilst on the one hand excessive fear of the C.I.D. was driven out of the peasants' minds, on the other, their presence exercised a natural restraint on exaggeration. It was the business of C.I.D. friends to entrap people and so the peasants had necessarily to be cautious.

As I did not want to irritate the planters, but to win them over by gentleness, I made a point of writing to and meeting such of them against whom allegations of a serious nature were made. I met the Planters' Association as well, placed the ryots' grievances before them and acquainted myself with their point of view. Some of the planters hated me, some were indifferent and a few treated me with courtesy.

17. COMPANIONS

Brajkishorebabu and Rajendrababu were a matchless pair. Their devotion made it impossible for me to take a single step without their help. Their disciples, or their companions Shambhaubabu, Anugrahababu, Dharanibabu, Ramnavmibabu and other vakils were always with us. Vindhyababu and Janakdharibabu also came and helped us now and then. All these were Biharis. Their principal work was to take down the ryots' statements.

Professor Kripalani could not but cast in his lot with us. Though a

Sindhi he was more Bihari than a born Bihari. I have seen only a few workers capable of merging themselves in the province of their adoption. Kripalani is one of those few. He made it impossible for anyone to feel that he belonged to a different province. He was my gatekeeper in chief. For the time being he made it the end and aim of his life to save me from darshan seekers. He warded off people, calling to his aid now his unfailing humour, now his non-violent threats. At nightfall he would take up his occupation of a teacher and regale his companions with his historical studies and observations, and quicken any timid visitor into bravery.

Maulana Mazharul Haq had registered his name on the standing list of helpers whom I might count upon whenever necessary, and he made a point of looking in once or twice a month. The pomp and splendour in which he then lived was in sharp contrast to his simple life of today. The way in which he associated with us made us feel that he was one of us, though his fashionable habit gave a stranger a different impression.

As I gained more experience of Bihar, I became convinced that work of a permanent nature was impossible without proper village education. The ryots' ignorance was pathetic. They either allowed their children to roam about, or made them toil on indigo plantations from morning to night for a couple of coppers a day. In those days a male labourer's wage did not exceed ten pice, a female's did not exceed six, and a child's three. He who succeeded in earning four annas a day was considered most fortunate.

In consultation with my companions I decided to open primary schools in six villages. One of our conditions with the villagers was that they should provide the teachers with board and lodging while we would see to the other expenses. The village folk had hardly any cash in their hands, but they could well afford to provide foodstuffs. Indeed they had already expressed their readiness to contribute grain and other raw materials.

From where to get the teachers was a great problem. It was difficult to find local teachers who would work for a bare allowance or without remuneration. My idea was never to entrust children to commonplace teachers. Their literary qualification was not so essential as their moral fibre.

So I issued a public appeal for voluntary teachers. It received a ready response. Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande sent Babasaheb Soman and Pundalik Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale came from Bombay and Mrs. Anandibai Vaishampayan from Poona. I sent to the Ashram for Chhotalal, Surendranath and my son Devdas. About this time Mahadev Desai and

Narahari Parikh with their wives cast in their lot with me. Kasturbai was also summoned for the work. This was a fairly strong contingent. Shrimati Avantikabai and Shrimati Anandibai were educated enough, but Shrimati Durga Desai and Shrimati Manibehn Parikh had nothing more than a bare knowledge of Gujarati, and Kasturbai not even that. How were these ladies to instruct the children in Hindi?

I explained to them they were expected to teach the children not grammar and the three R's so much as cleanliness and good manners. I further explained that even as regards letters there was not so great a difference between Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi as they imagined, and in the primary classes, at any rate, the teaching of the rudiments of the alphabet and numerals was not a difficult matter. The result was that the classes taken by these ladies were found to be most successful. The experience inspired them with confidence and interest in their work. Avantikabai's became a model school. She threw herself heart and soul into her work. She brought her exceptional gifts to bear on it. Through these ladies we could, to some extent, reach the village women.

But I did not want to stop at providing for primary education. The villages were insanitary, the lanes full of filth, the wells surrounded by mud and stink and the courtyards unbearably untidy. The elder people badly needed education in cleanliness. They were all suffering from various skin diseases. They were all suffering from sanitary work as possible and to penetrate every department of their lives.

Doctors were needed for this work. I requested the Servants of India Society to lend us the services of the late Dr. Dev. We had been great friends, and he readily offered his services for six months. The teachers men and women had all to work under him.

All of them had express instructions not to concern themselves with grievances against planters or with politics. People who had any complaints to make were to be referred to me. No one was to venture out of his beat. The friends carried out these instructions with wonderful fidelity. I do not remember a single occasion of indiscipline.

18. PENETRATING THE VILLAGES

As far as was possible we placed each school in charge of one man and one woman. These volunteers had to look after medical relief and sanitation. The womenfolk had to be approached through women.

Medical relief was a very simple affair. Castor oil, quinine and sulphur ointment were the only drugs provided to the volunteers. If the patient

showed a furred tongue or complained of constipation, castor oil was administered, in case of fever quinine was given after an opening dose of castor oil, and the sulphur ointment was applied in case of boils and itch after thoroughly washing the affected parts. No patient was permitted to take home any medicine. Wherever there was some complication Dr. Dev used to visit each centre on certain fixed days in the week.

Quite a number of people availed themselves of this simple relief. This plan of work will not seem strange when it is remembered that the prevailing ailments were few and amenable to simple treatment, by no means requiring expert help. As for the people the arrangement answered excellently.

Sanitation was a difficult affair. The people were not prepared to do anything themselves. Even the field labourers were not ready to do their own scavenging. But Dr. Dev was not a man easily to lose heart. He and the volunteers concentrated their energies on making a village ideally clean. They swept the roads and the courtyards, cleaned out the wells, filled up the pools near by, and lovingly persuaded the villagers to raise volunteers from amongst themselves. In some villages they shamed people into taking up the work, and in others the people were so enthusiastic that they even prepared roads to enable my car to go from place to place. These sweet experiences were not unmixed with bitter ones of people's apathy. I remember some villagers frankly expressing their dislike for this work.

It may not be out of place here to narrate an experience that I have described before now at many meetings. Bhitiharva was a small village in which was one of our schools. I happened to visit a smaller village in its vicinity and found some of the women dressed very dirtily. So I told my wife to ask them why they did not wash their clothes. She spoke to them. One of the women took her into her hut and said: 'Look now, there is no box or cupboard here containing other clothes. The *sari* I am wearing is the only one I have. How am I to wash it? Tell Mahatmaji to get me another *sari*, and I shall then promise to bathe and put on clean clothes every day.'

This cottage was not an exception, but a type to be found in many Indian villages. In countless cottages in India people live without any furniture, and without a change of clothes, merely with a rag to cover their shame.

One more experience I will note. In Champaran there is no lack of bamboo and grass. The school hut they had put up at Bhitiharva was made of these materials. Someone possibly some of the neighbouring

planters' men set fire to it one night. It was not thought advisable to build another hut of bamboo and grass. The school was in charge of Sjt. Soman and Kasturbai. Sjt. Soman decided to build a *pukka* house, and thanks to his infectious labour, many co-operated with him, and a brick house was soon made ready. There was no fear now of this building being burnt down.

Thus the volunteers with their schools, sanitation work and medical relief gained the confidence and respect of the village folk, and were able to bring good influence to bear upon them.

But I must confess with regret that my hope of putting this constructive work on a permanent footing was not fulfilled. The volunteers had come for temporary periods, I could not secure any more from outside, and permanent honorary workers from Bihar were not available. As soon as my work in Champaran was finished, work outside, which had been preparing in the meantime, drew me away. The few months' work in Champaran, however, took such deep root that its influence in one form or another is to be observed there even today.

19. WHEN A GOVERNOR IS GOOD

Whilst on the one hand social service work of the kind I have described in the foregoing chapters was being carried out, on the other the work of recording statements of the ryots' grievances was progressing apace. Thousands of such statements were taken, and they could not but have their effect. The ever growing number of ryots coming to make their statements increased the planters' wrath, and they moved heaven and earth to counteract my inquiry.

One day I received a letter from the Bihar Government to the following effect: 'Your inquiry had been sufficiently prolonged; should you not now bring it to an end and leave Bihar?' The letter was couched in polite language, but its meaning was obvious.

I wrote in reply that the inquiry was bound to be prolonged, and unless and until it resulted in bringing relief to the people, I had no intention of leaving Bihar, I pointed out that it was open to Government to terminate my inquiry by accepting the ryots' grievances as genuine and redressing them, or by recognizing that the ryots had made out a *prima facie* case for an official inquiry which should be immediately instituted.

Sir Edward Gait, the Lieutenant Governor, asked me to see him, expressed his willingness to appoint an inquiry and invited me to be a

member of the Committee. I ascertained the names of the other members, and after consultation with my co-workers agreed to serve on the Committee, on condition that I should be free to confer with my co-workers during the progress of the inquiry, that Government should recognize that, by being a member of the Committee, I did not cease to be the ryots' advocate, and that in case the result of the inquiry failed to give me satisfaction, I should be free to guide and advise the ryots as to what line of action they should take.

Sir Edward Gait accepted the condition as just and proper and announced the inquiry. The late Sir Frank Sly was appointed Chairman of the Committee.

The Committee found in favour of the ryots, and recommended that the planters should refund a portion of the exactions made by them which the Committee had found to be unlawful, and that the *tinkathia* system should be abolished by law.

Sir Edward Gait had a large share in getting the Committee to make unanimous report and in getting the agrarain bill passed in accordance with the Committee's recommendations. Had he not adopted a firm attitude, and had he not brought all his tact to bear on the subject, the report would not have been unanimous, and the Agrarian Act would not have been passed. The planters wielded extraordinary power. They offered strenuous opposition to the bill in spite of the report, but Sir Edwin Gait remained firm up to the last and fully carried out the recommendations of the Committee.

The *tinkathia* system which had been in existence for about a century was thus abolished and with it the planters' *raj* came to an end. The ryots, who had all along remained crushed, now somewhat came to their own, and the superstition that the stain of indigo could never be washed out was exploded.

It was my desire to continue the constructive work for some years, to establish more schools and to penetrate the villages more effectively. The ground had been prepared, but it did not please God, as often before, to allow my plans to be fulfilled. Fate decided otherwise and drove me to take up work elsewhere.

20. IN TOUCH WITH LABOUR

Whilst I was yet winding up my work on the Committee, I received a letter from Sjts. Mohanlal Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh telling me of the failure of crops in the Kheda district, and asking me to guide the

peasants, who were unable to pay the assessment. I had not the inclination, the ability or the courage to advise without an inquiry on the spot.

At the same time there came a letter from Shrimati Anasuyabai about the condition of labour in Ahmedabad, Wages were low, the labourers had long been agitating for an increment, and I had a desire to guide them if I could. But I had not the confidence to direct even this comparatively small affair from that long distance. So I seized the first opportunity to go to Ahmedabad. I had hoped that I should be able to finish both these matters quickly and get back to Champaran to supervise the constructive work that had been inaugurated there.

But things did not move as swiftly as I had wished, and I was unable to return to Champaran, with the result that the schools closed down one by one. My co-workers and I had built many castles in the air, but they all vanished for the time being.

One of these was cow protection work in Champaran, besides rural sanitation and education. I had seen, in the course of my travels, that cow protection and Hindi propaganda had become the exclusive concern of the Marwadis. A Marwadi friend had sheltered me in his *dharmashala* whilst at Bettiah. Other Marwadis of the place had interested me in their *goshala* (dairy). My ideas about cow protection had been definitely formed then, and my conception of the work was the same as it is today. Cow protection, in my opinion, included cattle-breeding, improvement of the stock, humane treatment of bullocks, formation of model dairies, etc. The Marwadi friends had promised full co-operation in this work, but as I could not fix myself up in Champaran, the scheme could not be carried out.

The *goshala* in Bettiah is still there, but it has not become a model dairy, the Champaran bullock is still made to work beyond his capacity, and the so-called Hindu still cruelly belabours the poor animal and disgraces his religion.

That this work should have remained unrealized has been, to me, a continual regret, and whenever I go to Champaran and hear the gentle reproaches of the Marwadi and Bihari friends, I recall with a heavy sigh all those plans which I had to drop so abruptly.

The educational work in one way or another is going on in many places. But the cow protection work had not taken firm root, and has not, therefore, progressed in the direction intended.

Whilst the Kheda peasants' question was still being discussed, I had already taken up the question of the mill-hands in Ahmedabad.

I was in a most delicate situation. The mill-hands' case was strong.

Shrimati Anasuyabai had to battle against her own brother, Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai, who led the fray on behalf of the mill-owners. My relations with them were friendly, and that made fighting with them the more difficult. I held consultations with them, and requested them to refer the dispute to arbitration.

I had therefore to advise the labourers to go on strike. Before I did so, I came in very close contact with them and their leaders, and explained to them the conditions of a successful strike: 1. never to resort to violence, 2. never to molest blacklegs, 3. never to depend upon alms, and 4. to remain firm, no matter how long the strike continued, and to earn bread, during the strike, by any other honest labour.

The leaders of the strike understood and accepted the conditions, and the labourers pledged themselves at a general meeting not to resume work until either their terms were accepted or the mill-owners agreed to refer the dispute to arbitration.

It was during this strike that I came to know intimately Sjts. Vallabhbai Patel and Shankarlal Banker. Shrimati Anasuyabai I knew well before this.

We had daily meetings of the strikers under the shade of a tree on the bank of the Sabarmati. They attended the meeting in their thousands, and I reminded them in my speeches of their pledge and of the duty to maintain peace and self-respect. They daily paraded the streets of the city in peaceful procession, carrying their banner bearing the inscription '*Ek Tek*' (keep the pledge).

The strike went on for twenty-one days. During the continuance of the strike I consulted the mill-owners from time to time and entreated them to do justice to the labourers. 'We have our pledge too,' they used to say. 'Our relations with the labourers are those of parents and children....How can we brook the interference of a third party? Where is the room for arbitration?'

21. A PEEP INTO THE ASHRAM

Before I proceed to describe the progress of the labour dispute it is essential to have a peep into the Ashram. All the while I was in Champaran the Ashram was never out of my mind, and occasionally I paid it flying visits.

At that time the Ashram was in Kochrab, a small village near Ahmedabad. Plague broke out in this village, and I saw evident danger to the safety of the Ashram children. It was impossible to keep ourselves

immune from the effects of the surrounding insanitation, however scrupulously we might observe the rules of cleanliness within the Ashram walls. We were not then equal either to getting the Kochrab people to observe these rules nor to serving the village otherwise.

Our ideal was to have the Ashram at a safe distance both from town and village, and yet at a manageable distance from either. And we were determined, some day, to settle on ground of our own.

The plague, I felt, was sufficient notice to quit Kochrab. Sjt. Punjabhai Hirachand, a merchant in Ahmedabad, had come in close contact with the Ashram, and used to serve us in a number of matters in a pure and selfless spirit. He had a wide experience of things in Ahmedabad, and he volunteered to procure us suitable land. I went about with him north and south of Kochrab in search of land, and then suggested to him to find out a piece of land three or four miles to the north. He hit upon the present site. Its vicinity to the Sabarmati Central Jail was for me a special attraction. As jail-going was understood to be the normal lot of Satyagrahis, I liked this position. And I knew that the sites selected for jails have generally clean surroundings.

In about eight days the sale was executed. There was no building on the land and no tree. But its situation on the bank of the river and its solitude were great advantages.

We decided to start by living under canvas, and having a tin shed for a kitchen, till permanent houses were built.

The Ashram had been slowly growing. We were now over forty souls, men, women and children, having our meals at a common kitchen. The whole conception about the removal was mine, the execution was as usual left to Maganlal.

Our difficulties, before we had permanent living accommodation, were great. The rains were impending, and provisions had to be got from the city four miles away. The ground, which had been a waste, was infested with snakes, and it was no small risk to live with little children under such conditions. The general rule was not to kill the snakes, though I confess none of us had shed the fear of these reptiles, nor have we even now.

The rule of not killing venomous reptiles had been practised for the most part at Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati. At each of these places we had to settle on waste lands. We have had, however, no loss of life occasioned by snakebite. I see, with the eye of faith, in this circumstance the hand of the God of Mercy. Let no one cavil at this, saying that God can never be partial, and that He has no time to meddle with the humdrum

affairs of men. I have no other language to express the fact of the matter, to describe this uniform experience of mine. Human language can but imperfectly describe God's ways. I am sensible of the fact that they are indescribable and inscrutable. But if mortal man will dare to describe them, he has no better medium than his own inarticulate speech. Even if it be a superstition to believe that complete immunity from harm for twenty-five years in spite of a fairly regular practice of non-killing is not a fortuitous accident but a grace of God, I should still hug that superstition.

During the strike of the mill-hands in Ahmedabad the foundation of the Ashram weaving shed was being laid. For the principal activity of the Ashram was then weaving. Spinning had not so far been possible for us.

22. THE FAST

For the first two weeks the mill-hands exhibited great courage and self-restraint and daily held monster meetings. On these occasions I used to remind them of their pledge, and they would shout back to me the assurance that they would rather die than break their word.

But at last they began to show signs of flagging. Just as physical weakness in men manifests itself in irascibility, their attitude towards the blacklegs became more and more menacing as the strike seemed to weaken, and I began to fear an outbreak of rowdyism on their part. The attendance at their daily meetings also began to dwindle by degrees, and despondency and despair were writ large on the faces of those who did attend. Finally the information was brought to me that the strikers had begun to totter. I felt deeply troubled and set to thinking furiously as to what my duty was in the circumstances. I had had experience of a gigantic strike in South Africa, but the situation that confronted me here was different. The mill-hands had taken the pledge at my suggestion. They had repeated it before me day after day, and the very idea that they might now go back upon it was to me inconceivable. Was it pride or was it my love for the labourers and my passionate regard for truth that was at the back of this feeling who can say?

One morning it was at a mill-hands' meeting while I was still groping and unable to see my way clearly, the light came to me. Unbidden and all by themselves the words came to my lips: 'Unless the strikers rally,' I declared to the meeting, 'and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food.'

The labourers were thunderstruck. Tears began to course down Anasuyabehn's cheeks. The labourers broke out, 'Not you but we shall

fast. It would be monstrous if you were to fast. Please forgive us for our lapse, we will now remain faithful to our pledge to the end.'

'There is no need for you to fast,' I replied. 'It would be enough if you could remain true to your pledge. As you know we are without funds, and we do not want to continue our strike by living on public charity. You should therefore try to eke out a bare existence by some kind of labour, so that you may be able to remain unconcerned, no matter how long the strike may continue. As for my fast, it will be broken only after the strike is settled.'

In the meantime Vallabhbhai was trying to find some employment for the strikers under the Municipality, but there was not much hope of success there. Maganlal Gandhi suggested that, as we needed sand for filling the foundation of our weaving school in the Ashram, a number of them might be employed for that purpose. The labourers welcomed the proposal. Anasuyabehn led the way with a basket on her head and soon an endless stream of labourers carrying baskets of sand on their heads could be seen issuing out of the hollow of the river-bed. It was a sight worth seeing. The labourers felt themselves infused with a new strength, and it became difficult to cope with the task of paying out wages to them.

My fast was not free from a grave defect. For as I have already mentioned in a previous chapter. I enjoyed very close and cordial relations with the mill-owners, and my fast could not but affect their decision. As a Satyagrahi I knew that I might not fast against them, but ought to leave them free to be influenced by the mill-hands' strike alone. My fast was undertaken not on account of lapse of which, as their representative, I felt I had a share. With the mill-owners, I could only plead; to fast against them would amount to coercion. Yet in spite of my knowledge that my fast was bound to put pressure upon them, as in fact it did, I felt I could not help it. The duty to undertake it seemed to me to be clear.

I tried to set the mill-owners at ease. 'There is not the slightest necessity for you to withdraw from your position,' I said to them. But they received my words coldly and even flung keen, delicate bits of sarcasm at me, as indeed they had a perfect right to do.

The principal man at the back of the mill-owners' unbending attitude towards the strike was Sheth Ambalal. His resolute will and transparent sincerity were wonderful and captured my heart. It was a pleasure to be pitched against him. The strain produced by my fast upon the opposition, of which he was the head, cut me, therefore, to the quick. And then,

Sarladevi, his wife, was attached to me with the affection of a blood-sister, and I could not bear to see her anguish on account of my action.

Anasuyabhen and a number of other friends and labourers shared the fast with me on the first day. But after some difficulty I was able to dissuade them from continuing it further.

The net result of it was that an atmosphere of goodwill was created all round. The hearts of the mill-owners were touched, and they set about discovering some means for a settlement. Anasuyabehn's house became the venue of their discussions. Sjt. Anandshankar Dhruva intervened and was in the end appointed arbitrator, and the strike was called off after I had fasted only for three days. The mill-owners commemorated the event by distributing sweets among the labourers, and thus a settlement was reached after 21 days' strike.

At the meeting held to celebrate the settlement, both the mill-owners and the Commissioner were present. The advice which the latter gave to the mill-hands on this occasion was: 'You should always act as Mr. Gandhi advises you.' Almost immediately after these events I had to engage in a tussle with this very gentleman. But circumstances were changed, and he had changed with the circumstances. He then set about warning the Patidars of Kheda against following my advice!

I must not close this chapter without noting here an incident, as amusing as it was pathetic. It happened in connection with the distribution of sweets. The mill-owners had ordered a very large quantity, and it was a problem how to distribute it among the thousands of labourers. It was decided that it would be the fittest thing to distribute it in the open, beneath the very tree under which the pledge had been taken, especially as it would have been extremely inconvenient to assemble them all together in any other place.

I had taken it for granted that the men who had observed strict discipline for full 21 days would without any difficulty be able to remain standing in an orderly manner while the sweets were being distributed, and not make an impatient scramble for them. But when it came to the test, all the methods that were tried for making the distribution failed. Again and again their ranks would break into confusion after distribution had proceeded for a couple of minutes. The leaders of the mill-hands tried their best to restore order, but in vain. The confusion, the crush and the scramble at last became so great that quite an amount of the sweets was spoiled by being trampled under foot, and the attempt to distribute them in the open had finally to be given up. With difficulty we succeeded in taking away the remaining sweets to Sheth Ambalal's bungalow in

Mirzapur. Sweets were distributed comfortably the next day within the compound of that bungalow.

The comic side of this incident is obvious, but the pathetic side bears mention. Subsequent inquiry revealed the fact that the beggar population of Ahmedabad, having got scent of the fact that sweets were to be distributed under the *Ek-Tek* tree, had gone there in large numbers, and it was their hungry scramble for the sweets that had created all the confusion and disorder.

The grinding poverty and starvation with which our country is afflicted is such that it drives more and more men every year into the ranks of the beggars, whose desperate struggle for bread renders them insensible to all feelings of decency and self-respect. And our philanthropists, instead of providing work for them and insisting on their working for bread, give them alms.

23. THE KHEDA SATYAGRAHA

No breathing time was, however, in store for me. Hardly was the Ahmedabad mill-hands' strike over, when I had to plunge into the Kheda Satyagraha struggle.

A condition approaching famine had arisen in the Kheda district owing to a widespread failure of crops, and the Patidars of Kheda were considering the question of getting the revenue assessment for the year suspended.

Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar had already inquired into and reported on the situation and personally discussed the question with the Commissioner, before I gave definite advice to the cultivators. Sjts. Mohanlal Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh had also thrown themselves into the fight, and had set up an agitation in the Bombay Legislative Council through Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel and the late Sir Gokuldas Kahandas Parekh. More than one deputation had waited upon the Governor in that connection.

I was at this President of the Gujarat Sabha. The Sabha sent petitions and telegrams to the Government and even patiently swallowed the insults and threats of the Commissioner. The conduct of the officials on this occasion was so ridiculous and undignified as to be almost incredible now.

The cultivators' demand was as clear as daylight, and so moderate as to make out a strong case for its acceptance. Under the Land Revenue Rules, if the crop was four annas or under, the cultivators could claim full suspension of the revenue assessment for the year. According to the

official figures the crop was said to be over four annas. The contention of the cultivators, on the other hand, was that it was less than four annas. But the Government was in no mood to listen, and regarded the popular demand for arbitration as *lese majeste*. At last all petitioning and prayer having failed, after taking counsel with co-workers, I advised the Patidars to resort to Satyagraha.

Besides the volunteers of Kheda, my principal comrades in this struggle were Sjts. Vallabhbhai Patel, Shankarlal Banker, Shrimati Anasuyabehn, Sjts. Indulal Yajnik, Mahadev Desai and others. Sjt. Vallabhbhai, in joining the struggle, had to suspend a splendid and growing practice at the bar, which for all practical purposes he was never able to resume.

The following pledge was signed by the Satyagrahis:

‘Knowing that the crops of our villages are less than four annas, we requested the Government to suspend the collection of revenue assessment till the ensuing year, but the Government had not acceded to our prayer. Therefore, we, the undersigned, hereby solemnly declare that we shall not, of our own accord, pay to the Government the full or the remaining revenue for the year. We shall let the Government take whatever legal steps it may think fit and gladly suffer the consequences of our non-payment. We shall rather let our lands be forfeited than that by voluntary payment we should allow our case to be considered false or should compromise our self-respect. Should the Government, however, agree to suspend collection of the second instalment of the assessment throughout the district, such amongst us as are in a position to pay will pay up the whole or the balance of the revenue that may be due. The reason why those who are able to pay still withhold payment is that, if they pay up, the poorer ryots may in a panic sell their chattels or incur debts to pay their dues, and thereby bring suffering upon themselves. In these circumstances we feel that, for the sake of the poor, it is the duty even of those who can afford to pay to withhold payment of their assessment.’

I cannot devote many chapters to this struggle. So a number of sweet recollections in this connection will have to be crowded out. Those who want to make a fuller and deeper study of this important fight would do well to read the full and authentic history of the Kheda Satyagraha by Sjt. Shankarlal Parikh of Kathlal, Kheda.

24. 'THE ONION THIEF'

Champaran being in a far away corner of India, and the press having been kept out of the campaign, it did not attract visitors from outside. Not so with the Kheda campaign, of which the happenings were reported in the press from day to day.

The Gujaratis were deeply interested in the fight, which was to them a novel experiment. They were ready to pour forth their riches for the success of the cause. It was not easy for them to see that Satyagraha could not be conducted simply by means of money. Money is the thing that it least needs. In spite of my remonstrance, the Bombay merchants sent us more money than necessary, so that we had some balance left at the end of the campaign.

At the same time the Satyagrahi volunteers had to learn the new lesson of simplicity. I cannot say that they imbibed it fully, but they considerably changed their ways of life.

For the Patidar farmers, too, the fight was quite a new thing. We had, therefore, to go about from village to village explaining the principles of the Satyagraha.

The main thing was to rid the agriculturists of their fear by making them realize that the officials were not the masters but the servants of the people, inasmuch as they received their salaries from the taxpayer. And then it seemed well nigh impossible to make them realize the duty of combining civility with fearlessness. Once they had shed the fear of the officials, how could they be stopped from returning their insults? And yet if they resorted to incivility it would spoil their Satyagraha, like a drop of arsenic in milk. I realized later that they had less fully learnt the lesson of civility than I had expected. Experience has taught me that civility is the most difficult part of Satyagraha. Civility does not here mean the mere outward gentleness and desire to do the opponent good. These should show themselves in every act of a Satyagrahi.

In the initial stages, though the people exhibited much courage, the Government did not seem inclined to take strong action. But as the people's firmness showed no signs of wavering, the Government began coercion. The attachment officers sold people's cattle and seized whatever movables they could lay hands on. Penalty notices were served, and in some cases standing crops were attached. This unnerved the peasants, some of whom paid up their dues, while others desired to place safe movables in the way of the officials so that they might attach them to realize the dues. On the other hand some were prepared to fight to the bitter end.

While these things were going on, one of Sjt. Shankarlal Parikh's tenants paid up the assessment in respect of his land. This created a sensation. Sjt. Shankarlal Parikh immediately made amends for his tenant's mistake by giving away for charitable purposes the land for which the assessment had been paid. He thus saved his honour and set a good example to others.

With a view to steeling the hearts of those who were frightened, I advised the people, under the leadership of Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya, to remove the crop of onion, from a field which had been, in my opinion wrongly attached. I did not regard this as civil disobedience, but even if it was, I suggested that this attachment of standing crops, though it might be in accordance with law, was morally wrong, and was nothing short of looting, and that therefore it was the people's duty to remove the onion in spite of the order of attachment. This was a good opportunity for the people to learn a lesson in courting fines or imprisonment, which was the necessary consequence of such disobedience. For Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya it was a thing after his heart. He did not like the campaign to end without someone undergoing suffering in the shape of imprisonment for something done consistently with the principles of Satyagraha. So he volunteered to remove the onion crop from the field, and in this seven or eight friends joined him.

It was impossible for the Government to leave them free. The arrest of Sjt. Mohanlal and his companions added to the people's enthusiasm. When the fear of jail disappears, repression puts heart into the people. Crowds of them besieged the court-house on the day of the hearing. Pandya and his companions were convicted and sentenced to a brief term of imprisonment. I was of opinion that the conviction was wrong, because the act of removing the onion crop could not come under the definition of 'theft' in the Penal Code. But no appeal was filed as the policy was to avoid the law courts.

A procession escorted the 'convicts' to jail, and on that day Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya earned from the people the honoured title of dungli Chor (onion thief) which he enjoys to this day.

The conclusion of the Kheda Satyagraha I will leave to the next chapter.

25. END OF KHEDA SATYAGRAHA

The campaign came to an unexpected end. It was clear that the people were exhausted, and I hesitated to let the unbending be driven to utter

ruin. I was casting about for some graceful way of terminating the struggle which would be acceptable to a Satyagrahi. Such a one appeared quite unexpectedly. The Mamlatdar of the Nadiad Taluka sent me word that, if well-to-do Patidars paid up, the poorer ones would be granted suspension. I asked for a written undertaking to that effect, which was given. But as a Mamlatdar could be responsible only for his Taluka, I inquired of the Collector, who alone could give an undertaking in respect of the whole district, whether the Mamlatdar's undertaking was true for the whole district. He replied that orders declaring suspension in terms of the Mamlatdar's letter had been already issued. I was not aware of it, but if it was a fact, the people's pledge had been fulfilled. The pledge, it will be remembered, had the same things for its object, and so we expressed ourselves satisfied with the orders.

However, the end was far from making me feel happy, inasmuch as it lacked the grace with which the termination of every Satyagraha campaign ought to be accompanied. The Collector carried on as though he had done nothing by way of a settlement. The poor were to be granted suspension, but hardly any got the benefit of it. It was the people's right to determine who was poor, but they could not exercise it. I was sad that they had not the strength to exercise the right. Although, therefore, the termination was celebrated as a triumph of Satyagraha, I could not enthuse over it, as it lacked the essentials of a complete triumph.

The end of a Satyagraha campaign can be described as worthy, only when, it leaves the Satyagrahis stronger and more spirited than they are in the beginning.

The campaign was not, however, without its indirect results which we can see today and the benefit of which we are reaping. The Kheda Satyagraha marks the beginning of an awakening among the peasants of Gujarat, the beginning of their true political education.

Dr. Besant's brilliant Home Rule agitation had certainly touched the peasants, but it was the Kheda campaign that compelled the educated public workers to establish contact with the actual life of the peasants. They learnt to identify themselves with the latter. They found their proper sphere of work, their capacity for sacrifice increased. That Vallabhbhai found himself during this campaign was by itself no small achievement. We could realize its measure during the flood relief operations last year and the Bardoli Satyagraha this year. Public life in Gujarat became instinct with a new energy and a new vigour. The Patidar peasant came to an unforgettable consciousness of his strength. The lesson was indelibly imprinted on the public mind that the salvation of the people depends

upon themselves, upon their capacity for suffering and sacrifice. Through the Kheda campaign Satyagraha took firm root in the soil of Gujarat.

Although, therefore, I found nothing to enthuse over in the termination of the Satyagraha, the Kheda peasants were jubilant, because they knew that what they had achieved was commensurate with their effort, and they had found the true and infallible method for a redress of their grievances. This knowledge was enough justification for their jubilation.

Nevertheless the Kheda peasants had not fully understood the inner meaning of Satyagraha, and they saw it to their cost, as we shall see in the chapters to follow.

26. PASSION FOR UNITY

The Kheda campaign was launched while the deadly war in Europe was still going on. Now a crisis had arrived, and the Viceroy had invited various leaders to a war conference in Delhi. I had also been urged to attend the conference. I have already referred to the cordial relations between Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, and myself.

In response to the invitation I went to Delhi. I had, however, objections to taking part in the conference, the principal one being the exclusion from it of leaders like the Ali Brothers. They were then in jail. I had met them. Everyone had spoken highly of their much services and their courage. I had not then come in close touch with Hakim Saheb, but Principal Rudra and Dinabandhu Andrews had told me a deal in his praise. I had met Mr. Shuaib Qureshi and Mr. Khwaja at the Muslim League in Calcutta. I had also come in contact with Drs. Ansari and Abdur Rahman. I was seeking the friendship of good Musalmans, and was eager to understand the Musalman mind through contact with their purest and most patriotic representatives. I therefore never needed any pressure to go with them, wherever they took me, in order to get into intimate touch with them.

I had realized early enough in South Africa that there was no genuine friendship between the Hindus and the Musalmans. I never missed a single opportunity to remove obstacles in the way of unity. It was not in my nature to placate anyone by adulation, or at the cost of self-respect. But my South African experiences had convinced me that it would be on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity that my Ahimsa would be put to its severest test, and that the question presented the widest field for my experiments in Ahimsa. The conviction is still there. Every moment of my life I realize that God is putting me on my trial.

Having such strong convictions on the question when I returned from South Africa, I prized the contact with the Brothers. But before closer touch could be established they were isolated. Maulana Mahomed Ali used to write long letters to me from Betul and Chhindwada whenever his jailers allowed him to do so. I applied for permission to visit the Brothers but to no purpose.

It was after the imprisonment of the Ali Brothers that I was invited by Muslim friends to attend the session of the Muslim League at Calcutta. Being requested to speak, I addressed them on the duty of the Muslims to secure the Brother's release. A little while after this I was taken by these friends to the Muslim College at Aligarh. There I invited the young men to be fakirs for the service of the motherland.

Next I opened correspondence with the Government for the release of the Brothers. In that connection I studied the Brothers' views and activities about the Khilafat. I had discussions with Musalman friends. I felt that, if I would become a true friend of the Muslims, I must render all possible help in securing the release of the Brothers, and a just settlement of the Khilafat question. It was not for me to enter into the absolute merits of the question, provided there was nothing immoral in their demands. In matters of religion beliefs differ, and each one's is supreme for himself. If all had the same belief about all matters of religion, there would be only one religion in the world. As time progressed I found that the Muslim demand about the Khilafat was not only not against any ethical principle, but that the British Prime Minister had admitted the justice of the Muslim demand. I felt, therefore, bound to render what help I could in securing a due fulfilment of the prime Minister's pledge. The pledge had been given in such clear terms that the examination of the Muslim demand on the merits was needed only to satisfy my own conscience.

Friends and critics have criticized my attitude regarding the Khilafat question. In spite of the criticism I feel that I have no reason to revise it or to regret my co-operation with the Muslims. I should adopt the same attitude, should a similar occasion arise.

When, therefore, I went to Delhi, I had fully intended to submit the Muslim case to the Viceroy. The Khilafat question had not then assumed the shape it did subsequently.

But on my reaching Delhi another difficulty in the way of my attending the conference arose. Dinabandhu Andrews raised a question about the morality of my participation in the war conference. He told me of the controversy in the British press regarding secret treaties between England and Italy. How could I participate in the conference, if England had entered

into secret treaties with another European power? asked Mr. Andrews. I knew nothing of the treaties. Dinabandhu Andrews' word was enough for me. I therefore addressed a letter to Lord Chelmsford explaining my hesitation to take part in the conference. He invited me to discuss the question with him. I had a prolonged discussion with him and his Private Secretary Mr. Maffey. As a result I agreed to take part in the conference. This was in effect the Viceroy's argument: 'Surely you do not believe that the Viceroy knows everything done by the British Cabinet. I do not claim, no one claims, that the British Government is infallible. But if you agree that the Empire has been, on the whole, a power for good, if you believe that India has, on the whole, benefited by the British connection, would you not admit that it is the duty of every Indian citizen to help the Empire in the hour of its need? I too have read what the British papers say about the secret treaties. I can assure you that I know nothing beyond what the papers say, and you know the canards that these papers frequently start. Can you, acting on a mere newspapers report, refuse help to the Empire at such a critical juncture? You may raise whatever moral issues you like and challenge us as much as you please after the conclusion of the war, not today.'

The argument was not new. It appealed to me as new because of the manner in which, and the hour at which, it was presented, and I agreed to attend the conference. As regards the Muslim demands I was to address a letter to the Viceroy.

27. RECRUITING CAMPAIGN

So I attended the conference. The Viceroy was very keen on my supporting the resolution about recruiting. I asked for permission to speak in Hindi-Hindustani. The Viceroy acceded to my request, but suggested that I should speak also in English. I had no speech to make. I spoke but one sentence to this effect: 'With a full sense of my responsibility I beg to support the resolution.'

Many congratulated me on my having spoken in Hindustani. That was, they said, the first instance within living memory of anyone having spoken in Hindustani at such a meeting. The congratulations and the discovery that I was the first to speak in Hindustani at a Viceregal meeting hurt my national pride. I felt like shrinking into myself. What a tragedy that the language of the country should be taboo in meeting held in the country, for work relating to the country, and that a speech there in Hindustani by a stray individual like myself should be a matter for

congratulation? Incidents like these are reminders of the low state to which we have been reduced.

The one sentence that I uttered at the conference had for me considerable significance. It was impossible for me to forget either the conference or the resolution I supported. There was one undertaking that I had to fulfil while yet in Delhi. I had to write a letter to the Viceroy. This was no easy thing for me. I felt it my duty both in the interests of the Government and of the people to explain therein how and why I attended the conference, and to state clearly what the people expected from Government.

In the letter I expressed my regret for the exclusion from the conference of leaders like Lokamanya Tilak and the Ali Brothers, and stated the people's minimum political demand as also the demands of the Muslims on account of the situation created by the war. I asked for permission to publish the letter, and the Viceroy gladly gave it.

The letter had to be sent to Simla, where the Viceroy had gone immediately after the conference. The letter had for me considerable importance, and sending it by post would have meant delay. I wanted to save time, and yet I was not inclined to send it by any messenger I came across. I wanted some pure man to carry it and hand it personally at the Viceregal Lodge. Dinabandhu Andrews and Principal Rudra suggested the name of the good Rev. Ireland of the Cambridge Mission. He agreed to carry the letter if he might read it and if it appealed to him as good. I had no objection as the letter was by no means private. He read it, liked it and expressed his willingness to carry out the mission. I offered him the second class fare, but he declined it saying he was accustomed to travelling intermediate. This he did though it was a night journey. His simplicity and his straight and plainspoken manner captivated me. The letter thus delivered at the hands of a pureminded man had, as I thought, the desired result. It eased my mind and cleared my way.

The other part of my obligation consisted in raising recruits. Where could I make a beginning except in Kheda? And whom could I invite to be the first recruits except my own co-workers? So as soon as I reached Nadiad, I had a conference with Vallabhbhai and other friends. Some of them could not easily take to the proposal. Those who liked the proposal had misgivings about its success. There was no love lost between the Government and the classes to which I wanted to make my appeal. The bitter experience they had had of the Government officials was still fresh in their memory.

And yet they were in favour of starting work. As soon as I set about

my task, my eyes were opened. My optimism received a rude shock. Whereas during the revenue campaign the people readily offered their carts free of charge, and two volunteers came forth when one was needed, it was difficult now to get a cart even on hire, to say nothing of volunteers. But we would not be dismayed. We decided to dispense with the use of carts and to do our journeys on foot. At this rate we had to trudge about 20 miles a day. If carts were not forthcoming, it was idle to expect people to feed us. It was hardly proper to ask for food. So it was decided that every volunteer must carry his food in his satchel. No bedding or sheet was necessary as it was summer.

We had meetings wherever we went. People did attend, but hardly one or two would offer themselves as recruits. 'You are a votary of Ahimsa, how can you ask us to take up arms?' 'What good has Government done for India to deserve our co-operation?' These and similar questions used to be put to us.

However, our steady work began to tell. Quite a number of names were registered, and we hoped that we should be able to have a regular supply as soon as the first batch was sent. I had already begun to confer with the Commissioner as to where the recruits were to be accommodated.

The Commissioners in every division were holding conferences on the Delhi model. One such was held in Gujarat. My co-workers and I were invited to it. We attended, but I felt there was even less place for me here than at Delhi. In this atmosphere of servile submission I felt ill at ease. I spoke somewhat at length. I could say nothing to please the officials, and had certainly one or two hard things to say.

I used to issue leaflets asking people to enlist as recruits. One of the arguments I had used was distasteful to the Commissioner: 'Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India, history will look upon the Act depriving a whole nation of arms as the blackest. If we want the Arms Act to be repealed, if we want to learn the use of arms, here is a golden opportunity. If the middle classes render voluntary help to Government in the hour of its trial, distrust will disappear, and the ban on possessing arms will be withdrawn.' The Commissioner referred to this and said that he appreciated my presence in the conference in spite of the differences between us. And I had to justify my standpoint as courteously as I could.

Here is the letter to the Viceroy referred to above:

'As you are aware, after careful consideration, I felt constrained to convey to Your Excellency that I could not attend the Conference for reasons stated in the letter of the 26th instant (April), but after the interview you were good enough to grant me, I persuaded myself to join it, if for no

other cause, then certainly out of my great regard for yourself. One of my reasons for abstention and perhaps the strongest was that Lokamanya Tilak, Mrs. Besant and the Ali Brothers, whom I regard as among the most powerful leaders of public opinion, were not invited to the Conference. I still feel that it was a grave blunder not to have asked them, and I respectfully suggest that blunder might be possibly repaired if these leaders were invited to assist the Government by giving it the benefit of their advice at the Provincial Conferences, which I understand are to follow. I venture to submit that no Government can afford to disregard the leaders, who represent the large masses of the people as these do, even though they may hold views fundamentally different. At the same time it gives me pleasure to be able to say that the views of all parties were permitted to be freely expressed at the Committees of the Conference. For my part, I purposely refrained from stating my views at the Committee at which I had the honour of serving, or at the Conference itself. I felt that I could best serve the objects of the Conference by simply tendering my support to the resolutions submitted to it, and this I have done without any reservation. I hope to translate the spoken word into action as early as the Government can see its way to accept my offer, which I am submitting simultaneously herewith in a separate letter.

‘I recognize that in the hour of its danger we must give, as we have decided to give, ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire of which we aspire in the near future to be partners in the same sense as the Dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily. On that account, even as performance of duty automatically confers a corresponding right, people are entitled to believe that the imminent reforms alluded to in your speech will embody the main general principles of the Congress-League Scheme, and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference to tender to the Government their full-hearted co-operation.

‘If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions, and not whisper “Home Rule” or “Responsible Government” during the pendency of the War. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment, and I know that India, by this very act, would become the most favoured partner in the Empire, and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past. But practically the whole of educated India has decided to take a less effective course, and it is no longer possible to say that educated India does not exercise any influence on the masses. I

have been coming into most intimate touch with the ryots ever since my return from South Africa to India, and I wish to assure you that the desire for Home Rule has widely penetrated them. I was present at the session that full Responsible Government should be granted to British India within a period to be fixed definitely by a parliamentary Statute. I admit that it is a bold step to take, but I feel sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule to be realized in the shortest possible time will satisfy the Indian people. I know that there are many in India who consider no sacrifice as too great in order to achieve the end, and they are wakeful enough to realize that they must be equally prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Empire in which they hope and desire to reach their final status. It follows then that we can but accelerate our journey to the goal by silently and simply devoting ourselves heart and soul to the work of delivering the Empire from the threatening danger. It will be national suicide not to recognize this elementary truth. We must perceive that, if we serve to save the Empire, we have in that very act secured Home Rule.

‘Whilst, therefore, it is clear to me that we should give to the Empire every available man for its defence, I fear that I cannot say the same thing about financial assistance. My intimate intercourse with the ryots convinces me that India has already donated to the Imperial Exchequer beyond her capacity. I know that in making this statement I am voicing the opinion of the majority of my countrymen.

‘The Conference means for me, and I believe for many of us, a definite step in the consecration of our lives to the common cause, but ours is a peculiar position. We are today outside the partnership. Ours is a consecration based on hope of better future. I should be untrue to you and to my country if I did not clearly and unequivocally tell you what that hope is. I do not bargain for its fulfilment, but you should know that disappointment of hope means disillusion.

‘There is one thing I may not omit. You have appealed to us to sink domestic differences. If the appeal involves the toleration of tyranny and wrongdoing on the part of officials, I am powerless to respond. I shall resist organized tyranny to the uttermost. The appeal must be to the officials that they do not ill-treat a single soul, and that they consult and respect an age-long tyranny I have shown the ultimate sovereignty of British justice. In Kheda a population that was cursing the Government now feels that it, and not the Government, is the power when it is prepared to suffer for the truth it represents. It is, therefore, losing its bitterness and is saying to itself that the Government must be a Government for

people, for it tolerates orderly and respectful disobedience where injustice is felt. Thus Champaran and Kheda affairs are my direct, definite and special contribution to the War. Ask me to suspend my activities in that direction and you ask me to suspend my life. If I could popularize the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in place of brute force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out of season, therefore, I shall discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering, and present it for acceptance to those who care, and if I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law.

‘Lastly, I would like you to ask His Majesty’s Ministers to give definite assurance about Mohammedan States. I am sure you know that every Mohammedan is deeply interested in them. As a Hindu, I cannot be indifferent to their cause. Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In the most scrupulous regard for the rights of those States and for the Muslim sentiment as to their places of worship, and your just and timely treatment of India’s claim to Home Rule lies the safety of the Empire. I write this, because I love the English nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty of Englishmen.’

28. NEAR DEATH’S DOOR

I very nearly ruined my constitution during the recruiting campaign. In those days my food principally consisted of groundnut butter and lemons. I knew that it was possible to eat too much butter and injure one’s health, and yet I allowed myself to do so. This gave me a slight attack of dysentery. I did not take serious notice of this, and went that evening to the Ashram, as was my wont every now and then. I scarcely took any medicine in those days. I thought I should get well if I skipped a meal, and indeed I felt fairly free from trouble as I omitted the morning meal next day. I knew, however, that to be entirely free I must prolong my fast and, if I ate anything at all, I should have nothing but fruit juices.

There was some festival that day, and although I had told Kasturbai that I should have nothing for my midday meal, she tempted me and I succumbed. As I was under a vow of taking no milk or milk products, she had specially prepared for me a sweet wheaten porridge with oil added to it instead of *ghi*. She had reserved too a bowlful of *mung* for me. I was fond of these things, and I readily took them, hoping that without coming to grief I should eat just enough to please Kasturbai and to satisfy my palate. But the devil had been only waiting for an opportunity. Instead of

eating very little I had my fill of the meal. This was sufficient invitation to the angel of death. Within an hour the dysentery appeared in acute form.

The same evening I had to go back to Nadiad. I walked with very great difficulty to the Sabarmati station, a distance of only ten furlongs. Sjt. Vallabhbhai, who joined me at Ahmedabad, saw that I was unwell, but I did not allow him to guess how unbearable the pain was.

We reached Nadiad at about ten o'clock. The Hindu Anathashram where we had our headquarters was only half a mile from the station; but it was as good as ten for me. I somehow managed to reach the quarters, but the griping pain was steadily increasing. Instead of using the usual latrine which was a long way off, I asked for a commode to be placed in the adjoining room. I was ashamed to have to ask for this, but there was no escape. Sjt. Fulchand immediately procured a commode. All the friends surrounded me deeply concerned. They were all love and attention, but they could not relieve my pain. And my obstinacy added to their helplessness. I refused all medical aid. I would take no medicine, but preferred to suffer the penalty for my folly. So they looked on in helpless dismay. I must have had thirty to forty motions in twenty-four hours. I fasted, not taking even fruit juices in the beginning. The appetite had all gone. I had thought all along that I had an iron frame, but I found that my body had now become a lump of clay. It had lost all power of resistance. Dr. Kanuga came and pleaded with me to take medicine. I declined. He offered to give me an injection. I declined that too. My ignorance about injections was in those days quite ridiculous. I believed that an injection must be some kind of serum. Later I discovered that the injection that the doctor suggested was a vegetable substance, but the discovery was too late to be of use. The motions still continued, leaving me completely exhausted. The exhaustion brought on a delirious fever. The friends got more nervous, and called in more doctors. But what could they do with a patient who would not listen to them?

Sheth Ambalal with his good wife came down to Nadiad, conferred with my co-workers and removed me with the greatest care to his Mirzapur bungalow in Ahmedabad. It was impossible for anyone to receive more loving and selfless service than I had the privilege of having during this illness. But a sort of low fever persisted, wearing away my body from day to day, I felt that the illness was bound to be prolonged and possibly fatal. Surrounded as I was with all the love and attention that could be showered on me under Sheth Ambalal's roof, I began to get restless and

urged him to remove me to the Ashram. He had to yield to my importunity.

Whilst I was thus tossing on the bed of pain in the Ashram, Sjt. Vallabhbhai brought the news that Germany had been completely defeated, and that the Commissioner had sent word that recruiting was no longer necessary. The news that I had no longer to worry myself about recruiting came as a very great relief.

I had now been trying hydropathy which gave some relief, but it was a hard job to build up the body. The many medical advisers overwhelmed me with advice, but I could not persuade myself to take anything. Two or three suggested meat broth as a way out of the milk vow, and cited authorities from Ayurveda in support of their advice. One of them strongly recommended eggs. But for all of them I had but one answer-no.

For me the question of diet was not one to be determined on the authority of the Shastras. It was one interwoven with my course of life which is guided by principles no longer depending upon outside authority. I had no desire to live at the cost of them. How could I relinquish a principle in respect of myself, when I had enforced it relentlessly in respect of my wife, children and friends?

This protracted and first long illness in my life thus afforded me a unique opportunity to examine my principles and to test them. One night I gave myself up to despair. I felt that I was at death's door. I sent word to Anasuyabehn. She ran down to the Ashram. Vallabhbhai came up with Dr. Kanuga, who felt my pulse and said 'Your pulse is quite good. I see absolutely no danger. This is a nervous breakdown due to extreme weakness.' But I was far from being reassured. I passed the night without sleep.

The morning broke without death coming. But I could not get rid of the feeling that the end was near, and so I began to devote all my waking hours to listening to the Gita being read to me by the inmates of the Ashram. I was incapable of reading. I was hardly inclined to talk. The slightest talk meant a strain on the brain. All interest in living had ceased, as I have never liked to live for the sake of living. It was such an agony to live on in that helpless state, doing nothing, receiving the service of friends and co-workers, and watching the body slowly wearing away.

Whilst I lay thus ever expectant of death, Dr. Talvalkar came one day with a strange creature. He hailed from Maharashtra. He was not known to fame, but the moment I saw him I found that he was a crank like myself. He had come to try his treatment on me. He had almost finished his course of studies in the Grant Medical College without taking the degree. Later I came to know that he was a member of the Brahmo Samaj.

Sjt. Kelkar, for that is his name, is a man of an independent and obstinate temperament. He swears by the ice treatment, which he wanted to try on me. We gave him the name of 'Ice Doctor'. He is quite confident that he has discovered certain things which have escaped qualified doctors. It is a pity both for him and me that he has not been able to infect me with his faith in his system. I believe in his system up to a certain point, but I am afraid he has been hasty in arriving at certain conclusions.

But whatever may be the merits of his discoveries, I allowed him to experiment on my body. I did not mind external treatment. The treatment consisted in the application of ice all over the body. Whilst I am unable to endorse his claim about the effect his treatment had on me, it certainly infused in me a new hope and a new energy, and the mind naturally reacted on the body. I began to have an appetite, and to have a gentle walk for five to ten minutes. He now suggested a reform in my diet. Said he: 'I assure you that you will have more energy and regain your strength quicker if you take raw eggs. Eggs are as harmless as milk. They certainly cannot come under the category of meat. And do you know that all eggs are not fertilized? There are sterilized eggs on the market.' I was not, however, prepared to take even the sterilized eggs. But the improvement was enough to give me interest in public activities.

29. THE ROWLATT BILLS AND MY DILEMMA

Friends and doctors assured me that I should recuperate quicker by a change to Matheran, so I went there. But the water at Matheran being very hard, it made my stay there extremely difficult. As a result of the attack of the dysentery that I had, my anal tract had become extremely tender, and owing to fissures, I felt an excruciating pain at the time of evacuation, so that the very idea of eating filled me with dread. Before the week was over, I had to flee from Matheran. Shankarlal Banker now constituted himself the guardian of my health, and pressed me to consult Dr. Dalal. Dr. Dalal was called accordingly. His capacity for taking instantaneous decisions captured me.

He said: 'I cannot rebuild your body unless you take milk. If in addition you would take iron and arsenic injections, I would guarantee fully to renovate your constitution.'

'You can give me the injections,' I replied, 'but milk is a different question; I have a vow against it.'

'What exactly is the nature of your vow?' the doctor inquired.

I told him the whole history and the reasons behind my vow, how,

since I had come to know that the cow and the buffalo were subjected to the process of *phooka*, I had conceived a strong disgust for milk. Moreover, I had always held that milk is not the natural diet of man. I had therefore abjured its use altogether. Kasturbai was standing near my bed listening all the time to this conversation.

‘But surely you cannot have any objection to goat’s milk then,’ she interposed.

The doctor too took up the strain. ‘If you will take goat’s milk, it will be enough for me,’ he said.

I succumbed. My intense eagerness to take up the Satyagraha fight had created in me a strong desire to live, and so I contented myself with adhering to the letter of my vow only, and sacrificed its spirit. For although I had only the milk of the cow and the she-buffalo in mind when I took the vow, by natural implication it covered the milk of all animals. Nor could it be right for me to use milk at all, so long as I held that milk is not the natural diet of man. Yet knowing all this I agreed to take goat’s milk. The will to live proved stronger than the devotion to truth, and for once the votary of truth compromised his sacred ideal by his eagerness to take up the Satyagraha fight. The memory of this action even now rankles in my breast and fills me with remorse, and I am constantly thinking how to give up goat’s milk. But I cannot yet free myself from that subtlest of temptations, the desire to serve, which still holds me.

My experience in dietetics are dear to me as a part of my researches in Ahimsa. They give me recreation and joy. But my use of goat’s milk today troubles me not from the view-point of dietetic Ahimsa so much as from that of truth, being no less than a breach of pledge. It seems to me that I understand the ideal of truth better than that of a Ahimsa, and my experience tells me that, if I let go my hold of truth, I shall never be able to solve the riddle of Ahimsa. The ideal of truth requires that vows taken should be fulfilled in the spirit as well as in the letter. In the present case I killed the spirit-the soul of my vow by adhering to its outer form only, and that is what galls me. But in spite of this clear knowledge I cannot see my way straight before me. In other words, perhaps, I have not the courage to follow the straight course. Both at bottom mean one and the same thing, for doubt is invariably the result of want or weakness of faith. ‘Lord, give me faith’ is, therefore, my prayer day and night.

Soon after I began taking goat’s milk, Dr. Dalal performed on me a successful operation for fissures. As I recuperated, my desire to live revived, especially because God had kept work in store for me.

I had hardly begun to feel my way towards recovery, when I happened

casually to read in the papers the Rowlatt Committee's report which had just been published. Its recommendations startled me. Shankarlal Banker and Umar Sobani approached me with the suggestion that I should take some prompt action in the matter. In about a month I went to Ahmedabad. I mentioned my apprehensions to Vallabhbhai, who used to come to see me almost daily. 'Something must be done,' said I to him. 'But what can we do in the circumstances?' he asked in reply. I answered, 'If even a handful of men can be found to sign the pledge of resistance, and the proposed measure is passed into law in defiance of it, we ought to offer Satyagraha at once. If I was not laid up like this, I should give battle against it all alone, and expect others to follow suit. But in my present helpless condition I feel myself to be altogether unequal to the task.'

As a result of this talk, it was decided to call a small meeting of such persons as were in touch with me. The recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee seemed to me to be altogether unwarranted by the evidence published in its report, and were, I felt, such that no self-respecting people could submit to them.

The proposed conference was at last held at the Ashram. Hardly a score of persons had been invited to it. So far as I remember, among those who attended were, besides Vallabhbhai, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Horniman, the late Mr. Umar Sobani, Sjt. Shankarlal Banker and Shrimati Anasuyabehn. The Satyagraha pledge was drafted at this meeting, and, as far as I recollect, was signed by all present. I was not editing any journal at that time, but I used occasionally to ventilate my views through the daily press. I followed the practice on this occasion. Shankarlal Banker took up the agitation in right earnest, and for the first time I got an idea of his wonderful capacity for organization and sustained work.

As all hope of any of the existing institutions adopting a novel weapon like Satyagraha seemed to me to be in vain, a separate body called the Satyagraha Sabha was established at my instance. Its principal members were drawn from Bombay where, therefore, its headquarters were fixed. The intending covenanters began to sign the Satyagraha pledge in large numbers, bulletins were issued, and popular meetings began to be held everywhere recalling all the familiar features of the Kheda campaign.

I became the president of the Satyagraha Sabha. I soon found that there was not likely to be much chance of agreement between myself and the intelligentsia composing this Sabha. My insistence on the use of Gujarati in the Sabha, as also some of my other methods of work that would appear to be peculiar, caused them no small worry and embarrassment. I must say to their credit, however, that most of them

generously put up with my idiosyncrasies.

But from the very beginning it seemed clear to me that the Sabha was not likely to live long. I could see that already my emphasis on truth and Ahimsa had begun to be disliked by some of its members. Nevertheless in its early stages our new activity went on at full blast, and the movement gathered head rapidly.

30. THAT WONDERFUL SPECTACLE !

Thus, while on the one hand the agitation against the Rowlatt Committee's report gathered volume and intensity, on the other the Government grew more and more determined to give effect to its recommendations, and the Rowlatt Bill was published. I have attended the proceeding of India's legislative chamber only once in my life, and that was on the occasion of the debate on this Bill. Shastriji delivered an impassioned speech, in which he uttered a solemn note of warning to the Government. The Viceroy seemed to be listening spell-bound, his eyes riveted on Shastriji as the latter poured forth the hot stream of his eloquence. For the moment it seemed to me as if the Viceroy could not but be deeply moved by it, it was so true and so full of feeling.

But you can wake a man only if he is really asleep; no effort that you may make will produce any effect upon him if he is merely pretending sleep. That was precisely the Government's position. It was anxious only to go through the farce of legal formality. Its decision had already been made. Shastriji's solemn warning was, therefore, entirely lost upon the Government.

In these circumstances mine could only be a cry in the wilderness. I earnestly pleaded with the Viceroy. I addressed him private letters as also public letters, in the course of which I clearly told him that the Government's action left me no other course except to resort to Sayagraha. But it was all in vain.

The Bill had not yet been gazetted as an Act. I was in a very weak condition, but when I received an invitation from Madras I decided to take the risk of the long journey. I could not at that time sufficiently raise my voice at meetings. The incapacity to address meetings standing still abides. My entire frame would shake, and heavy throbbing would start on an attempt to speak standing for any length of time.

I have ever felt at home in the south. Thanks to my South African work I felt I had some sort of special right over the Tamils and Telugus and the good people of the south have never belied my belief. The

invitation had come over the signature of the late Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. But the man behind the invitation, as I subsequently learnt on my way to Madras, was Rajagopalachari. This might be said to be my first acquaintance with him; at any rate this was the first time that we came to know each other personally.

Rajaagopalachari had then only recently left Salem to settle down for legal practice in Madras at the pressing invitation of friends like the late Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, and that with a view to taking a more active part in public life. It was with him that we had put up in Madras. This discovery I made only after we had stayed with him for a couple of days. For, since the bungalow that we were staying in belonged to Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. I was under the impression that we were his guests. Mahadev Desai, however, corrected me. He very soon formed a close acquaintance with Rajagopalachari, who, from his innate shyness, kept himself constantly in the background. But Mahadev put me on my guard. 'you should cultivate this man' he said to me one day.

And so I did. We daily discussed together plans of the fight, but beyond the holding of public meetings I could not then think of any other programme. I felt myself at a loss to discover how to offer civil disobedience against the Rowlatt Bill if it was finally passed into law. One could disobey it only if the Government gave one the opportunity for it. Failing that, could we civilly disobey other laws? And if so, where was the line to be drawn? These and a host of similar questions formed the theme of these discussions of ours.

Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar called together a small conference of leaders to thrash out the matter. Among those who took a conspicuous part in it was Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari. He suggested that I should draw up a comprehensive manual of the science of Satyagraha, embodying even minute details. I felt the task to be beyond my capacity, and I confessed as much to him. While these cogitations were still going on, news was received that the Rowlatt Bill had been published as an Act. That night I fell asleep while thinking over the question. Towards the small hours of the morning I woke up somewhat earlier than usual. I was still in that twilight condition between sleep and consciousness when suddenly the idea broke upon me—it was as if in a dream. Early in the morning I related the whole story to Rajagopalachari.

'The idea came to me last night in a dream that we should call upon the country to observe a general hartal. Satyagraha is a process of self-purification, and ours is a sacred fight, and it seems to me to be in the fitness of things that it should be commenced with an act of self-

purification. Let all the people of India, therefore, suspend their business on that day and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer. The Musalmans may not fast for more than one day; so the duration of the fast should be twenty-four hours. It is very difficult to say whether all the provinces would respond to this appeal of ours or not, but I feel fairly sure of Bombay, Madras, Bihar and Sindh. I think we should have every reason to feel satisfied even if all these places observe the hartal fittingly.'

Rajagopalachari was at once taken up with my suggestion. Other friends too welcomed it when it was communicated to them later. I drafted a brief appeal. The date of the hartal was first fixed on the 30th March 1919, but was subsequently changed to 6th April. The people thus had only a short notice of the hartal. As the work had to be started at once, it was hardly possible to give longer notice.

But who knows how it all came about? The whole of India from one end to the other, towns as well as villages, observed a complete hartal on that day. It was a most wonderful spectacle.

31. THAT MEMORABLE WEEK ! —I

After a short tour in South India I reached Bombay, I think on the 4th April, having received a wire from Sjt. Shankarlal Banker asking me to be present there for the 6th of April celebrations.

But in the meanwhile Delhi had already observed the hartal on the 30th March. The word of the late Swami Shraddhanandji and Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb was law there. The wire about the postponement of the hartal till the 6th of April had reached there too late. Delhi had never witnessed a hartal like that before. Hindus and Musalmans seemed united like one man. Swami Shraddhanandji was invited to deliver a speech in the Jama Masjid which he did. All this was more than the authorities could bear. The police checked the hartal procession as it was proceeding towards the railway station, and opened fire, causing a number of casualties, and the reign of repression commenced in Delhi. Shraddhanandji urgently summoned me to Delhi. I wired back, saying I would start for Delhi immediately after the 6th of April celebrations were over in Bombay.

The story of happenings in Delhi was repeated with variations in Lahore and Amritsar. From Amritsar Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlu had sent me a pressing invitation to go there. I was altogether unacquainted with them at that time, but I communicated to them my intention to visit

Amritsar after Delhi.

On the morning of the 6th, citizens of Bombay flocked in their thousands to the Chaupati for a bath in the sea, after which they moved on in a procession to Thakurdvar. The procession included a fair sprinkling of women and children, while the Musalmans joined it in large numbers. From Thakurdvar some of us who were in the procession were taken by the Musalman friends to a mosque nearby, where Mrs. Naidu and myself were persuaded to deliver speeches. Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani proposed that we should then and there administer the Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity pledges to the people, but I resisted the proposal on the ground that pledges should not be administered or taken in precipitate hurry, and that we should be satisfied with what was already being done by the people. A pledge once taken, I argued, must not be broken afterwards; therefore it was necessary that the implications of the Swadeshi pledge should be clearly understood, and the grave responsibility entailed by the pledge regarding Hindu-Muslim unity fully realized by all concerned. In the end I suggested that those who wanted to take the pledges should again assemble on the following morning for the purpose.

Needless to say the hartal in Bombay was a complete success. Full preparation had been made for starting civil disobedience. Two or three things had been discussed in this connection. It was decided that civil disobedience might be offered in respect of such laws only as easily lent themselves to being disobeyed by the masses. The salt tax was extremely unpopular and a powerful movement had been for some time past going on to secure its repeal. I therefore suggested that the people might prepare salt from sea-water in their own houses in disregard of the salt laws. My other suggestion was about the sale of proscribed literature. Two of my books, viz., *Hind Swaraj* and *Sarvodaya* (Gujarati adaptation of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*), which had been already proscribed, came handy for this purpose. To print and sell them openly seemed to be the easiest way of offering civil disobedience. A sufficient number of copies of the books was therefore printed, and it was arranged to sell them at the end of the monster meeting that was to be held that evening after the breaking of the fast.

On the evening of the 6th, an army of volunteers issued forth accordingly with this prohibited literature to sell it among the people. Both Shrimati Sarojini Devi and I went out in cars. All the copies were soon sold out. The proceeds of the sale were to be utilized for furthering the civil disobedience campaign. Both these books were priced at four annas per copy, but I hardly remember anybody having purchased them from

me at their face value merely. Quite a large number of people simply poured out all the cash that was in their pockets to purchase their copy. Five and ten rupee notes just flew out to cover the price of a single copy, while in one case I remember having sold a copy for fifty rupees! It was duly explained to the people that they were liable to be arrested and imprisoned for purchasing the proscribed literature. But for the moment they had shed all fear of jail-going.

It was subsequently learnt that the Government had conveniently taken the view that the books that had been proscribed by it had not in fact been sold, and that what we had sold was not held as coming under the definition of proscribed literature. The reprint was held by the Government to be a new edition of the books that had been proscribed, and to sell them did not constitute an offence under the law. This news caused general disappointment.

The next morning another meeting was held for the administration of the pledges with regard to Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity. Vithaldas Jerajani for the first time realized that all is not gold that glitters. Only a handful of persons came. I distinctly remember some of the sisters who were present on that occasion. The men who attended were also very few. I had already drafted the pledge and brought it with me. I thoroughly explained its meaning to those present before I administered it to them. The paucity of the attendance neither pained nor surprised me, for I have noticed this characteristic difference in the popular attitude—partiality for exciting work, dislike for quiet constructive effort. The difference has persisted to this day.

But I shall have to devote to this subject a chapter by itself. To return to the story. On the night of the 7th I started for Delhi and Amritsar. On reaching Mathura on the 8th I first heard rumours about my probable arrest. At the next stoppage after Mathura, Acharya Gidvani came to meet me, and gave me definite news that I was to be arrested, and offered his services to me if I should need them. I thanked him for the offer, assuring him that I would not fail to avail myself of it, if and when I felt it necessary.

Before the train had reached Palwal railway station, I was served with a written order to the effect that I was prohibited from entering the boundary of the Punjab, as my presence there was likely to result in a disturbance of the peace. I was asked by the police to get down from the train. I refused to do so saying, 'I want to go to the Punjab in response to a pressing invitation not to foment unrest, but to allay it. I am therefore sorry that it is not possible for me to comply with this order.'

At last the train reached Palwal. Mahadev was with me. I asked him

to proceed to Delhi to convey to Swami Shraddhanandji the news about what had happened and to ask the people to remain clam. He was to explain why I had decided to disobey the order served upon me and suffer the penalty for disobeying it, and also why it would spell victory for our side if we could maintain perfect peace in spite of any punishment that might be inflicted upon me.

At Palwal railway station I was taken out of the train and put under police custody. A train from Delhi came in a short time. I was made to enter a third class carriage, the police party accompanying. On reaching Mathura, I was taken to the police barracks, but no police official could tell me as to what they proposed to do with me or where I was to be taken next. Early at 4 o'clock the next morning I was waked up and put in a goods train that was going towards Bombay. At noon I was again made to get down at Sawai Madhopur. Mr. Bowring, Inspector of Police, who arrived by the mail train from Lahore, now took charge of me. I was put in a first class compartment with him. And from an ordinary prisoner I became a 'gentleman' prisoner. The officer commenced a long panegyric of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. Sir Michael had nothing against me personally, he went on, only he apprehended a disturbance of the peace if I entered the Punjab and so on. In the end he requested me to return to Bombay of my own accord and agree not to cross the frontier of the Punjab. I replied that I could not possibly comply with the order, and that I was not prepared of my own accord to go back. Whereupon the officer, seeing no other course, told me that he would have to enforce law against me. 'But what do you want to do with me?' I asked him. He replied that he himself did not know, but was awaiting further orders. 'For the present,' he said, I am taking you to Bombay.'

We reached Surat. Here I was made over to the charge of another police officer. 'You are now free,' the officer told me when we had reached Bombay. 'It would however be better,' he added, 'if you get down near the Marine Lines where I shall get the train stopped for you. At Colaba there is likely to be a big crowd.' I told him that I would be glad to follow his wish. He was pleased and thanked me for it. Accordingly I alighted at the Marine Lines. The carriage of a friend just happened to be passing by. It took me and left me at Revashankar Jhaveri's place. The friend told me that the news of my arrest had incensed the people and roused them to a pitch of mad frenzy. 'An outbreak is apprehended every minute near Pydhuni, the Magistrate and the police have already arrived there,' he added.

Scarcely had I reached my destination, when Umar Sobani and

Anasuyabehn arrived and asked me to motor to Pydhuni at once. 'The people have become impatient, and are very much excited,' they said, 'we cannot pacify them. Your presence alone can do it.'

I got into car. Near Pydhuni I saw that a huge crowd had gathered. On seeing me the people went mad with joy. A procession was immediately formed, and the sky was rent with the shouts of Vande mataram and Allaho akbar. At Pydhuni we sighted a body of mounted police. Brickbats were raining down from above. I besought the crowd to be calm, but it seemed as if we should not be able to escape the shower of brickbats. As the procession issued out of Abdur Rahman Street and was about to proceed towards the Crawford Market, it suddenly found itself confronted by a body of the mounted police, who had arrived there to prevent it from proceeding further in the direction of the Fort. The crowd was densely packed. It had almost broken through the police cordon. There was hardly any chance of my voice being heard in that vast concourse. Just then the officer in charge of the mounted police gave the order to disperse the crowd, and at once the mounted party charged upon the crowd brandishing their lances as they went. For a moment I felt that I would be hurt. But my apprehension was groundless, the lances just grazed the car as the lancers swiftly passed by. The ranks of the people were soon broken, and they were thrown into utter confusion, which was soon converted into a rout. Some got trampled under foot, others were badly mauled and crushed. In that seething mass of humanity there was hardly any room for the horses to pass, nor was there an exit by which the people could disperse. So the lancers blindly cut their way through the crowd. I hardly imagine they could see what they were doing. The whole thing presented a most dreadful spectacle. The horsemen and the people were mixed together in mad confusion.

Thus the crowd was dispersed and its progress checked. Our motor was allowed to proceed. I had it stopped before the Commissioner's office, and got down to complain to him about the conduct of the police.

32. THAT MEMORABLE WEEK !—II

So I went to the Commissioner Mr. Griffith's office. All about the staircase leading to the office I saw soldiers armed from top to toe, as though for military action. The verandah was all astir. When I was admitted to the office, I saw Mr. Bowring sitting with Mr. Griffith.

I described to the Commissioner the scenes I had witnessed. He replied briefly: 'I did not want the procession to proceed to the Fort, as a

disturbance was inevitable there. And as I saw that the people would not listen to persuasion, I could not help ordering the mounted police to charge through the crowd.'

'But,' said I, 'you knew what the consequences must be. The horses were bound to trample on the people. I think it was quite unnecessary to send that contingent of mounted men.'

'You cannot judge that,' said Mr. Griffith. 'We police officers know better than you the effect of your teaching on the people. If we did not start with drastic measures, the situation would pass out of our hands. I tell you that the people are sure to go out of your control. Disobedience of law will quickly appeal to them; it is beyond them to understand the duty of keeping peaceful. I have no doubt about your intentions, but the people will not understand them. They will follow their natural instinct.'

'It is there that I join issue with you,' I replied. 'The people are not by nature violent but peaceful.'

And thus we argued at length. Ultimately Mr. Griffith said, 'But suppose you were convinced that your teaching had been lost on the people, what would you do?'

'I should suspend civil disobedience if I were so convinced.'

'What do you mean? You told Mr. Bowring that you would proceed to the Punjab the moment you were released.'

'Yes, I wanted to do so by the next available train. But it is out of the question today.'

'If you will be patient, the conviction is sure to grow on you. Do you know what is happening in Ahmedabad? And what has happened in Amritsar? People have everywhere gone nearly mad. I am not yet in possession of all the facts. The telegraph wires have been cut in some places. I put it to you that the responsibility for all these disturbances lies on you.'

'I assure you I should readily take it upon myself wherever I discovered it. But I should be deeply pained and surprised, if I found that there were disturbances in Ahmedabad. I cannot answer for Amritsar. I have never been there, no one knows me there. But even about the Punjab I am certain of this much that, had not the Punjab Government prevented my entry into the Punjab, I should have been considerably helpful in keeping the peace there. By preventing me they gave the people unnecessary provocation.'

And so we argued on and on. It was impossible for us to agree. I told him that I intended to address a meeting on Chaupati and to ask the people to keep the peace, and took leave of him. The meeting was held on the

Chaupati sands. I spoke at length on the duty of non-violence and on the limitations of Satyagraha, and said: 'Satyagraha is essentially a weapon of the truthful. A Satyagrahi is pledged to non-violence, and, unless people observe it in thought, word and deed, I cannot offer mass Satyagraha.'

Anasuyabehn, too, had received news of disturbances in Ahmedabad. Some one had spread a rumour that she also had been arrested. The mill-hands had gone mad over her rumoured arrest, struck work and committed acts of violence, and a sergeant had been done to death.

I proceeded to Ahmedabad. I learnt that an attempt had been made to pull up the rails near the Nadiad railway station, that a Government officer had been murdered in Viramgam, and that Ahmedabad was under martial law. The people were terror-stricken. They had indulged in acts of violence and were being made to pay for them with interest.

A police officer was waiting at the station to escort me to Mr. Pratt, the Commissioner. I found him in a state of rage. I spoke to him gently, and expressed my regret for the disturbances. I suggested that martial law was unnecessary, and declared my readiness to co-operate in all efforts to restore peace. I asked for permission to hold a public meeting on the grounds of the Sabarmati Ashram. The proposal appealed to him, and the meeting was held, I think, on Sunday, the 13th of April, and martial law was withdrawn the same day or the day after. Addressing the meeting, I tried to bring home to the people the sense of their wrong, declared a penitential fast of three days for myself, appealed to the people to go on a similar fast for a day, and suggested to those who had been guilty of acts of violence to confess their guilt.

I saw my duty as clear as daylight. It was unbearable for me to find that the labourers, amongst whom I had spent a good deal of my time, whom I had served, and from whom I had expected better things, had taken part in the riots, and I felt I was a sharer in their guilt.

Just as I suggested to the people to confess their guilt, I suggested to the Government to condone the crimes. Neither accepted my suggestion.

The late Sir Ramanbhai and other citizens of Ahmedabad came to me with an appeal to suspend Satyagraha. The appeal was needless, for I had already made up my mind to suspend Satyagraha so long as people had not learnt the lesson of peace. The friends went away happy.

There were, however, others who were unhappy over the decision. They felt that, if I expected peace everywhere and regarded it as a condition precedent to launching Satyagraha, mass Satyagraha would be an impossibility. I was sorry to disagree with them. If those amongst whom I worked, and whom I expected to be prepared for non-violence

and self-suffering, could not be non-violent, Satyagraha was certainly impossible. I was firmly of opinion that those who wanted to lead the people to Satyagraha ought to be able to keep the people within the limited non-violence expected of them. I hold the same opinion even today.

33. 'A HIMALAYAN MISCALCULATION'

Almost immediately after the Ahmedabad meeting I went to Nadiad. It was here that I first used the expression 'Himalayan miscalculation' which obtained such a wide currency afterwards. Even at Ahmedabad I had begun to have a dim perception of my mistake. But when I reached Nadiad and saw the actual state of things there and heard reports about a large number of people from Kheda district having been arrested, it suddenly dawned upon me that I had committed a grave error in calling upon the people in the Kheda district and elsewhere to launch upon civil disobedience prematurely, as it now seemed to me. I was addressing a public meeting. My confession brought down upon me no small amount of ridicule. But I have never regretted having made that confession. For I have always held that it is only when one sees one's own mistakes with a convex lens, and does just the reverse in the case of others, that one is able to arrive at a just relative estimate of the two. I further believe that a scrupulous and conscientious observance of this rule is necessary for one who wants to be a Satyagrahi.

Let us now see what that Himalayan miscalculation was. Before one can be fit for the practice of civil disobedience one must have rendered a willing and respectful obedience to the state laws. For the most part we obey such laws out of fear of the penalty for their breach, and this holds good particularly in respect of such laws as do not involve a moral principle. For instance, an honest, respectable man will not suddenly take to stealing, whether there is a law against stealing or not, but this very man will not feel any remorse for failure to observe the rule about carrying head-lights on bicycles after dark. Indeed it is doubtful whether he would even accept advice kindly about being more careful in this respect. But he would observe any obligatory rule of this kind, if only to escape the inconvenience of facing a prosecution for a breach of the rule. Such compliance is not, however, the willing and spontaneous obedience that is required of a Satyagrahi. A Satyagrahi obeys the laws of society intelligently and of his own free will, because he considers it to be his sacred duty to do so. It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society scrupulously that he is in a position to judge as to which particular

rules are good and just and which unjust and iniquitous. Only then does the right accrue to him of the civil disobedience of certain laws in well-defined circumstances. My error lay in my failure to observe this necessary limitation. I had called on the people to launch upon civil disobedience before they had thus qualified themselves for it, and this mistake seemed to me of Himalayan magnitude. As soon as I entered the Kheda district, all the old recollections of the Kheda Satyagraha struggle came back to me, and I wondered how I could have failed to perceive what was so obvious. I realized that before a people could be fit for offering civil disobedience, they should thoroughly understand its deeper implications. That being so, before restarting civil disobedience on a mass scale, it would be necessary to create a band of well-trying, pure-hearted volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of Satyagraha. They could explain these to the people, and by sleepless vigilance keep them on the right path.

With these thoughts filling my mind I reached Bombay, raised a corps of Satyagrahi volunteers through the Satyagraha Sabha there, and with their help commenced the work of educating the people with regard to the meaning and inner significance of Satyagraha. This was principally done by issuing leaflets of an educative character bearing on the subject.

But whilst this work was going on, I could see that it was a difficult task to interest the people in the peaceful side of Satyagraha. The volunteers too failed to enlist themselves in large numbers. Nor did all those who actually enlisted take anything like a regular systematic training, and as the days passed by, the number of fresh recruits began gradually to dwindle instead of to grow. I realized that the progress of the training in civil disobedience was not going to be as rapid as I had at first expected.

34. 'NAVAJIVAN' AND 'YOUNG INDIA'

Thus, whilst this movement for the preservation of non-violence was making steady though slow progress on the one hand, Government's policy of lawless repression was in full career on the other, and was manifesting itself in the Punjab in all its nakedness. Leaders were put under arrest, martial law, which in other words meant no law, was proclaimed, special tribunals were set up. These tribunals were not courts of justice but instruments for carrying out the arbitrary will of an autocrat. Sentences were passed unwarranted by evidence and in flagrant violation of justice. In Amritsar innocent men and women were made to crawl like worms on

their bellies. Before this outrage the Jalianwala Bagh tragedy paled into insignificance in my eyes, though it was this massacre principally that attracted the attention of the people of India and of the world.

I was pressed to proceed to the Punjab immediately in disregard of consequences. I wrote and also telegraphed to the Viceroy asking for permission to go there, but in vain. If I proceeded without the necessary permission, I should not be allowed to cross the boundary of the Punjab, but left to find what satisfaction I could from civil disobedience. I was thus confronted by a serious dilemma. As things stood, to break the order against my entry into the Punjab could, it seemed to me, hardly be classed as civil disobedience, for I did not see around me the kind of peaceful atmosphere that I wanted, and the unbridled repression in the Punjab had further served to aggravate and deepen the feelings of resentment. For me, therefore, to offer civil disobedience at such a time, even if it were possible, would have been like fanning the flame. I therefore decided not to proceed to the Punjab in spite of the suggestion of friends. It was a bitter pill for me to swallow. Tales of rank injustice and oppression came pouring in daily from the Punjab, but all I could do was to sit helplessly by and gnash my teeth.

Just then Mr. Horniman, in whose hands *The Bombay Chronicle* had become a formidable force, was suddenly spirited away by the authorities. This act of the Government seemed to me to be surrounded by a foulness which still stinks in my nostrils. I know that Mr. Horniman never desired lawlessness. He had not liked my breaking the prohibitory order of the Punjab Government without the permission of the Satyagraha Committee, and had fully endorsed the decision to suspend civil disobedience. I had even announced my decision to that effect. Only owing to the distance between Bombay and Ahmedabad I got the letter after the announcement. His sudden deportation therefore caused me as much pain as surprise.

As a result of these developments I was asked by the directors of *The Bombay Chronicle* to take up the responsibility of conducting that paper. Mr. Brelvi was already there on the staff, so not much remained to be done by me, but as usual with my nature, the responsibility would have become an additional tax.

But the Government came as it were to my rescue, for by its order the publication of *The Chronicle* had to be suspended.

The friends who were directing the management of *The Chronicle*, Viz, Messrs. Umar Sobani and Shankarlal Banker, were at this also controlling *Young India*. They suggested that, in view of the suppression of *The Chronicle*, I should now take up the editorship of *Young India*,

and that, in order to fill the gap left by the former, Young India should be converted from a weekly into a biweekly organ. This was what I felt also. I was anxious to expound the inner meaning of Satyagraha to the public, and also hoped that through this effort I should at least be able to do justice to the Punjab situation. For, behind all I wrote, there was potential Satyagraha, and the Government knew as much. I therefore readily accepted the suggestion made by these friends.

But how could the general public be trained in Satyagraha through the medium of English? My principal field of work lay in Gujarat. Sjt. Indulal Yajnik was at that time associated with the group of Messrs. Sobani and Banker. He was conducting the Gujarati monthly Navajivan which had the financial backing of these friends. They placed the monthly at my disposal, and further Sjt. Indulal offered to work on it. This monthly was converted into a weekly.

In the meantime The Chronicle was resuscitated. Young India was therefore restored to its original weekly form. To have published the two weeklies from two different places would have been very inconvenient to me and involved more expenditure. As Navajivan was already being published from Ahmedabad Young India was also removed there at my suggestion.

There were other reasons besides for this change. I had already learnt from my experience of Indian Opinion that such journals needed a press of their own. Moreover the press laws in force in India at that time were such that, if I wanted to express my views untrammelled, the existing printing presses, which were naturally run for business, would have hesitated to publish them. The need for setting up a press of our own, therefore, became all the more imperative, and since this could be conveniently done only at Ahmedabad, Young India too had to be taken there.

Through these journals I now commenced to the best of my ability the work of educating the reading public in Satyagraha. Both of them had reached a very wide circulation, which at one time rose to the neighbourhood of forty thousand each. But while the circulation of Navajivan went up at a bound, that of Young India increased only by slow degrees. After my incarceration the circulation of both these journals fell to a low ebb, and today stands below eight thousand.

From the very start I set my face against taking advertisements in these journals. I do not think that they have lost anything thereby. On the contrary, it is my belief that it has in no small measure helped them to

maintain their independence.

Incidentally these journals helped me also to some extent to remain at peace with myself for, whilst immediate resort to civil disobedience was out of the question, they enabled me freely to ventilate my views and to put heart into the people. Thus I feel that both the journals rendered good service to the people in this hour of trial, and did their humble bit towards lightening the tyranny of the martial law.

35. IN THE PUNJAB

Sir Michael O'Dwyer held me responsible for all that had happened in the Punjab, and some irate young Punjabis held me responsible for the martial law. They asserted that, if only I had not suspended civil disobedience, there would have been no Jalianwala Bagh massacre. Some of them even went the length of threatening me with assassination if I went to the Punjab.

But I felt that my position was so correct and above question that no intelligent person could misunderstand it.

I was impatient to go to the Punjab. I had never been there before, and that made me all the more anxious to see things for myself. Dr. Satyapal, Dr. Kitchly and Pandit Rambhaji Dutt Chowdhari, who had invited me to the Punjab, were at this time in jail. But I felt sure that the Government could not dare to keep them and the other prisoners in prison for long. A large number of Punjabis used to come and see me whenever I was in Bombay. I ministered to them a word of cheer on these occasions, and that would comfort them. My self-confidence of that time was infectious.

But my going to the Punjab had to be postponed again and again. The Viceroy would say, 'not yet,' every time I asked for permission to go there, and so the thing dragged on.

In the meantime the Hunter Committee was announced to hold an inquiry in connection with the Punjab Government's doings under the martial law. Mr. C. F. Andrews had now reached the Punjab. His letters gave a heart-rending description that the martial law atrocities were in fact even worse than the press reports had showed. He pressed me urgently to come and join him. At the same time Malaviyaji sent telegrams asking me to proceed to the Punjab at once. I once more telegraphed to the Viceroy asking whether I could now go to the Punjab. He wired back in reply that I could go there after a certain date. I cannot exactly recollect

now, but I think it was 17th of October.

The scene that I witnessed on my arrival at Lahore can never be effaced from my memory. The railway station was from end to end one seething mass of humanity. The entire populace had turned out of doors in eager expectation, as if to meet a dear relation after a long separation, and was delirious with joy. I was put up at the late Pandit Rambhaji Dutt's bungalow, and the burden of entertaining me fell on the shoulders of Shrimati Sarala Devi. A burden it truly was, for even then, as now, the place where I was accommodated became a veritable caravanserai.

Owing to the principal Punjab leaders being in jail, their place, I found, had been properly taken up by Pandit Malaviyaji, Pandit Motilalji and the late Swami Shradhdhanandji. Malaviyaji and Shradhdhanandji I had known intimately before, but this was the first occasion on which I came in close personal contact with Motilalji. All these leaders, as also such local leaders as had escaped the privilege of going to jail, at once made me feel perfectly at home amongst them, so that I never felt like a stranger in their midst.

How we unanimously decided not to lead evidence before the Hunter Committee is now a matter of history. The reasons for that decision were published at that time, and need not be recapitulated here. Suffice it to say that, looking back upon these events from this distance of time, I still feel that our decision to boycott the Committee was absolutely correct and proper.

As a logical consequence of the boycott of the Hunter Committee, it was decided to appoint a non-official Inquiry Committee, to hold almost a parallel inquiry on behalf of the Congress. Pandit Motilal Nehru, the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das, Sjt. Abbas Tyabji, Sjt. M.R. Jayakar and myself were appointed to this Committee, virtually by Pandit Malaviyaji. We distributed ourselves over various places for purposes of inquiry. The responsibility for organizing the work of the Committee devolved on me, and as the privilege of conducting the inquiry in the largest number of places fell to my lot, I got a rare opportunity of observing at close quarters the people of the Punjab and the Punjab villages.

In the course of my inquiry I made acquaintance with the women of the Punjab also. It was as if we had known one another for ages. Wherever I went they came flocking, and laid before me their heaps of yarn. My work in connection with the inquiry brought home to me the fact that the Punjab could become a great field for Khadi work.

As I proceeded further and further with my inquiry into the atrocities that had been committed on the people, I came across tales of

Government's tyranny and the arbitrary despotism of its officers such as I was hardly prepared for, and they filled me with deep pain. What surprised me then, and what still continues to fill me with surprise, was the fact that a province that had furnished the largest number of soldiers to the British Government during the war, should have taken all these brutal excesses lying down.

The task of drafting the report of this Committee was also entrusted to me. I would recommend a perusal of this report to any one who wants to have an idea of the kind of atrocities that were perpetrated on the Punjab people. All that I wish to say here about it is that there is not a single conscious exaggeration in it anywhere, and every statement made in it is substantiated by evidence. Moreover, the evidence published was only a fraction of what was in the Committee's possession. Not a single statement, regarding the validity of which there was the report. This report, prepared as it was solely with a view to bringing out the truth and nothing but the truth, will enable the reader to see to what lengths the British Government is capable of going, and what inhumanities and barbarities it is capable of perpetrating in order to maintain its power. So far as I am aware, not a single statement made in this report has ever been disproved.

36. THE KHILAFAT AGAINST COW PROTECTION ?

We must now leave, for the time being these dark happening in the Punjab.

The Congress inquiry into Dyerism in the Punjab had just commenced, when I received a letter of invitation to be present at a joint conference of Hindus and Musalmans that was to meet at Delhi to deliberate on the Khilafat question. Among the signatories to it were the late Hakim Ajmal Khan Sahab and Mr. Asaf Ali. The late Swami Shraddhanandji, it was stated, would be attending and, if I remember aright, he was to be the vice-president of the conference, which, so far as I can recollect, was to be held in the November of that year. The Conference was to deliberate on the situation arising out of the Khilafat betrayal, and on the question as to whether the Hindus and Musalmans should take any part in the peace celebrations. The letter of invitation went on to say, among other things, that not only the Khilafat question but the question of cow protection as well would be discussed at the conference, and it would, therefore, afford a golden opportunity for a settlement of the question. I did not like this reference to the cow question.

In my letter in reply to the invitation, therefore, whilst promising to do my best to attend, I suggested that the two questions should not be mixed up together or considered in the spirit of a bargain, but should be decided on their own merits and treated separately.

With these thoughts filling my mind, I went to the conference. It was a very well attended gathering, though it did not present the spectacle of later gatherings that were attended by tens of thousands. I discussed the question referred to above with the late Swami Shraddhanandji, who was present at the conference. He appreciated my argument and left it to me to place it before the conference. I likewise discussed it with the late Hakim Saheb. Before the conference I contended that, if the Khilafat question had a just and legitimate basis, as I believe it had, and if the Government had really committed a gross injustice, the Hindus were bound to stand by the Musalmans in their demand for the redress of the Khilafat wrong. It would ill become them to bring in the cow question in this connection, or to use the occasion to make terms with the Musalmans, just as it would ill become the Musalmans to offer to stop cow slaughter as a price for the Hindus' support on the Khilafat question. But it would be another matter and quite graceful, and reflect great credit on them, if the Musalmans of their own free will stopped cow slaughter out of regard for the religious sentiments of the Hindus, and from a sense of duty towards them as neighbours and children of the same soil. To take up such an independent attitude was, I contended, their duty, and would enhance the dignity of their conduct. But if the Musalmans considered it as their neighbourly duty to stop cow slaughter, they should do so regardless of whether the Hindus helped them in the Khilafat or not. 'That being so,' I argued, 'the two questions should be discussed independently of each other, and the deliberations of the conference should be confined to the question of the Khilafat only.' My argument appealed to those present and, as a result, the question of cow protection was not discussed at this conference.

But in spite of my warning Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb said: 'No matter whether the Hindus help us or not, the Musalmans ought, as the countrymen of the Hindus, out of regard for the latter's susceptibilities, to give up cow slaughter.' And at one time it almost looked as if they would really put an end to it.

There was a suggestion from some quarters that the Punjab question should be tacked on to that of the Khilafat wrong. I opposed the proposal. The Punjab question, I said, was a local affair and could not therefore weigh with us in our decision to participate or not in the peace celebrations.

If we mixed up the local question with the Khilafat question, which arose directly out of the peace terms, we should be guilty of a serious indiscretion. My argument easily carried conviction.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani was present in this meeting. I had known him even before, but it was only here that I discovered what a fighter he was. We differed from each other almost from the very beginning, and in several matters the differences have persisted.

Among the numerous resolutions that were passed at this conference, one called upon both Hindus and Musalmans to take the Swadeshi vow, and as a natural corollary to it, to boycott foreign goods. Khadi had not as yet found its proper place. This was not a resolution that Hasrat Saheb would accept. His object was to wreak vengeance on the British Empire, in case justice was denied in a counter proposal for the boycott purely of British goods so far as practicable. I opposed it on the score of principle, as also of practicability, adducing for it those arguments that have now become pretty familiar. I also put before the conference my view-point of non-violence. I noticed that my arguments made a deep impression on the audience. Before me, Hasrat Mohani's speech had been received with such loud acclamations that I was afraid that mine would only be a cry in the wilderness. I had made bold to speak only because I felt it would be a dereliction of duty not to lay my views before the conference. But, to my agreeable surprise, my speech was followed with the closest attention by those present, and evoked a full measure of support among those on the platform, and speaker after speaker rose to deliver speeches in support of my views. The leaders were able to see that not only would the boycott of British goods fail of its purpose, but would, if adopted, make of them a laughing stock. There was hardly a man present in that assembly but had some article of British manufacture on his person. Many of the audience therefore realized that nothing but harm could result from adopting a resolution that even those who voted for it were unable to carry out.

'Mere boycott of foreign cloth cannot satisfy us, for who knows long it will be, before we shall be able to manufacture Swadeshi cloth in sufficient quantity for our needs, and before we can bring about effective boycott of foreign cloth? We want something that will produce an immediate effect on the British. Let your boycott of foreign cloth stand, we do not mind it, but give us something quicker, and speedier in addition'-so spoke in effect Maulana Hasrat Mohani. Even as I was listening to him, I felt that something new, over and above boycott of foreign cloth, would be necessary. An immediate boycott of foreign cloth seemed to me

also to be a clear impossibility at that time. I did not then know that we could, if we liked, produce enough Khadi for all our clothing requirements; this was only a later discovery. On the other hand, I knew even then that, if we depended on the mills alone for effecting the boycott of foreign cloth, we should be betrayed. I was still in the middle of this dilemma when the Maulana concluded his speech.

I was handicapped for want of suitable Hind or Urdu words. This was my first occasion for delivering an argumentative speech before an audience especially composed of Musalmans of the North. I had spoken in Urdu at the Muslim League at Calcutta, but it was only for a few minutes, and the speech was intended only to be a feeling appeal to the audience. Here, on the contrary, I was faced with a critical, if not hostile, audience, to whom I had to explain and bring home my view-point. But I had cast aside all shyness. I was not there to deliver an address in the faultless, polished Urdu of the Delhi Muslims, but to place before the gathering my views in such broken Hindi as I could command. And in this I was successful. This meeting afforded me a direct proof of the fact that Hindi-Urdu alone could become the *lingua franca* of India. Had I spoken in English, I could not have produced the impression that I did on the audience, and the Maulana might not have felt called upon to deliver his challenge. Nor, if he had delivered it, could I have taken it up effectively.

I could not hit upon a suitable Hindi or Urdu word for the new idea, and that put me out somewhat. At last I described it by the word 'non-operation,' an expression that I used for the first time at this meeting. As the Maulana was delivering his speech, it seemed to me that it was vain for him to talk about effective resistance to a Government with which he was co-operating in more than one thing, if resort to arms was impossible or undesirable. The only true resistance to the Government, it therefore seemed to me, was to cease to co-operate with it. Thus I arrived at the word non-co-operation. I had not then a clear idea of all its manifold implications. I therefore did not enter into details. I simply said:

The Musalmans have adopted a very important resolution. If the peace terms are unfavourable to them - which may God forbid - they will stop all co-operation with Government. It is an inalienable right of the people thus to withhold co-operation. We are not bound to retain Government titles and honours, or to continue in Government service. If Government should betray us in a great cause like the Khilafat, we could not do otherwise than non-co-operate. We are therefore entitled to non-co-operate with Government in case of a betrayal.'

But months elapsed before the word non-co-operation became current

coin. For the time being it was lost in the proceedings of the conference. Indeed when I supported the co-operation resolution at the Congress which met at Amritsar a month later, I did so in the hope that the betrayal would never come.

37. THE AMRITSAR CONGRESS

The Punjab Government could not keep in confinement the hundreds of Punjabis who, under the martial law regime, had been clapped into jail on the strength of the most meagre evidence by tribunals that were courts only in name. There was such an outcry all round against this flagrant piece of injustice that their further incarceration became impossible. Most of the prisoners were released before the Congress opened. Lala Harkishanlal and the other leaders were all released, while the session of the Congress was still in progress. The Ali Brothers too arrived there straight from jail. The people's joy knew no bounds. Pandit Motilal Nehru, who, at the sacrifice of his splendid practice, had made the Punjab his headquarters and had done great service, was the President of the Congress; the late Swami Shraddhanandji was the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

Up to this time my share in the annual proceedings of the Congress was confined only to the constructive advocacy of Hindi by making my speech in the national language, and to presenting in that speech the case of the Indians overseas. Nor did I expect to be called upon to do anything more this year. But, as had happened on many a previous occasion, responsible work came to me all of a sudden.

The King's announcement on the new reforms had just been issued. It was not wholly satisfactory even to me, and was unsatisfactory to everyone else. But I felt at that time that the reforms, though defective, could still be accepted. I felt in the King's announcement and its language the hand of Lord Sinha, and it lent a ray of hope. But experienced stalwarts like the late Lokamanya and Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das shook their heads. Pandit Malaviyaji was neutral.

Pandit Malaviyaji had harboured me in his own room. I had a glimpse of the simplicity of his life on the occasion of the foundation ceremony of the Hindu University; but on this occasion, being in the same room with him, I was able to observe his daily routine in the closest detail, and what I saw filled me with joyful surprise. His room presented the appearance of a free inn for all the poor. You could hardly cross from one

end to the other. It was so crowded. It was accessible at all odd hours to chance visitors who had the licence to take as much of his time as they liked. In a corner of this crib lay my charpai in all its dignity.

But I may not occupy this chapter with a description of Malaviyaji's mode of living, and must return to my subject. I was thus enabled to hold daily discussions with Malaviyaji, who used lovingly to explain to me, like an elder brother, the various view-points of the different parties. I saw that my participation in the deliberations on the resolution on the reforms was inevitable. Having had my share of responsibility in the drawing up of the Congress report on the Punjab wrongs, I felt that all that still remained to be done in that connection must claim my attention. There had to be dealings with Government in that matter. Then similarly there was the Khilafat question. I further believed at that time that Mr. Montagu would not betray or allow India's cause to be betrayed. The release of the Ali Brothers and other prisoners too seemed to me to be an auspicious sign. In these circumstances I felt that a resolution not rejecting but accepting the reforms was the correct thing. Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, on the other hand, held firmly to the view that the reforms ought to be rejected as wholly inadequate and unsatisfactory. The late Lokamanya was more or less neutral, but had decided to throw in his weight on the side of any resolution that the Deshabandhu might approve.

The idea of having to differ from such seasoned, well tried and universally revered leaders was unbearable to me. But on the other hand the voice of conscience was clear. I tried to run away from the Congress and suggested to Pandit Malaviyaji and Motilalji that it would be in the general interest if I absented myself from the Congress for the rest of the session. It would save me from having to make an exhibition of my difference with such esteemed leaders.

But my suggestion found no favour with these two seniors. The news of my proposal was somehow whispered to Lala Harkishanlal. 'This will never do. It will very much hurt the feelings of the Punjabis,' he said. I discussed the matter with Lokamanya, Deshabandhu and Mr. Jinnah, but no way out could be found. Finally I laid bare my distress to Malaviyaji. 'I see no prospect of a compromise,' I told him, 'and if I am to move my resolution, a division will have to be called and votes taken. But I do not find here any arrangements for it. The practice in the open session of the Congress so far has been to take votes by a show of hands with the result that all distinction between visitors and delegates is lost, while, as for taking a count of votes in such vast assemblies, we have no means at all. So it comes to this that, even if I want to call a division, there will be no

facility for it, nor meaning in it.' But Lala Harkishanlal came to the rescue and undertook to make the necessary arrangements. 'We will not,' he said, 'permit visitors in the Congress pandal on the day on which voting is to take place. And as for taking the count, well, I shall see to that. But you must not absent yourself from the Congress.' I capitulated; I framed my resolution, and in heart trembling undertook to move it. Pandit Malaviyaji and Mr. Jinnah were to support it. I could notice that, although our difference of opinion was free from any trace of bitterness, and although our speeches too contained nothing but cold reasoning, the people could not stand the very fact of a difference; it pained them. They wanted unanimity.

Even while speeches were being delivered, efforts to settle the difference were being made on the platform, and notes were being freely exchanged among the leaders for that purpose. Malaviyaji was leaving no stone unturned to bridge the gulf. Just then Jeramdas handed over his amendment to me and pleaded in his own sweet manner to save the delegates from the dilemma of a division. His amendment appealed to me. Malaviyaji's eye was already scanning every quarter for a ray of hope. I told him that Jeramdas's amendment seemed to me to be likely to be acceptable to both the parties. The Lokamanya, to whom it was next shown, said, 'If C.R.Das approves, I will have no objection.' Deshabandhu at last thawed, and cast a look towards Sjt. Bepin Chandra Pal for endorsement. Malaviyaji was filled with hope. He snatched away the slip of paper containing the amendment, and before Deshabandhu had even pronounced a definite 'yes', shouted out, 'Brother delegates, you will be glad to learn that a compromise had been reached.' What followed beggars description. The pandal was rent with the clapping of hands, and the erstwhile gloomy faces of the audience lit up with joy.

It is hardly necessary to deal with the text of the amendment. My object here is only to describe how this resolution was undertaken as part of my experiments with which these chapters deal.

The compromise further increased my responsibility.

38. CONGRESS INITIATION

I must regard my participation in Congress proceedings at Amritsar as my real entrance into the Congress politics. My attendance at the previous Congress was nothing more perhaps than an annual renewal of allegiance to the Congress. I never felt on these occasions that I had any other work cut out for me except that of a mere private, nor did I desire

more.

My experience of Amritsar had shown that there were one or two things for which perhaps I had some aptitude and which could be useful to the Congress. I could already see that the late Lokamanya, the Deshabandhu, Pandit Motilalji and other leaders were pleased with my work in connection with the Punjab inquiry. They used to invite me to their informal gatherings where, as I found resolutions for the Subjects Committee were conceived. At these gatherings only those persons were invited who enjoyed the special confidence of the leaders and whose services were needed by them. Interlopers also sometimes found their way to these meetings.

There were, for the coming year, two things which interested me, as I had some aptitude for them. One of these was the memorial of the Jalianwala Bagh Massacre. The Congress had passed a resolution for it amid great enthusiasm. A fund of about five lakhs had to be collected for it. I was appointed one of the trustees. Pandit Malaviyaji enjoyed the reputation of being the prince among beggars for the public cause. But I knew that I was not far behind him in that respect. It was whilst I was in South Africa that I discovered my capacity in this direction. I had not the unrivalled magic of Malaviyaji for commanding princely donations from the potentates of India. But I knew that there was no question of approaching the Rajas and Maharajas for donations for the Jalianwala Bagh memorial. The main responsibility for the collection thus fell, as I had expected, on my shoulders. The generous citizens of Bombay subscribed most liberally, and the memorial trust has at present a handsome credit balance in the bank. But the problem that faces the country today is what kind of memorial to erect on the ground, to sanctify which, Hindus, Musalmans and Sikhs mingled their blood. The three communities, instead of being bound in a bond of amity and love, are, to all appearance, at war with one another, and the nation is at a loss as to how to utilize the memorial fund.

My other aptitude which the Congress could utilize was as a draftsman. The Congress leaders had found that I had a faculty for condensed expression, which I had acquired by long practice. The then existing constitution of the Congress was Gokhale's legacy. He had framed a few rules which served as a basis of running the Congress machinery. The interesting history of the framing of these rules I had learnt from Gokhale's own lips. But everybody had now come to feel that these rules were no longer adequate for the ever increasing business of the Congress. The question had been coming up year after year. The Congress at that

time had practically no machinery functioning during the interval between session and session, or for dealing of the year. The existing rules provided for three secretaries, but as a matter of fact only one of them was a functioning secretary, and even he was not a whole-timer. How was he, single-handed, to run the Congress office, to think of the future, or to discharge during the current year the obligations contracted by the Congress in the past? During that year, therefore, everybody felt that this question would assume all the more importance. The Congress was too unwieldy a body for the discussion of public affairs. There was no limit set to the number of delegates in the Congress or to number of delegates that each province could return. Some improvement upon the existing chaotic condition was thus felt by everybody to be an imperative necessity. I undertook the responsibility of framing a constitution on one condition. I saw that there were two leaders, *viz.*, the Lokamanya and the Deshabandhu who had the greatest hold on the public. I requested that they, as the representatives of the people, should be associated with me on the Committee for framing the constitution. But since it was obvious that they would not have the time personally to participate in the constitution-making work, I suggested that two persons enjoying their confidence should be appointed along with me on the Constitution Committee, and that the number of its personnel should be limited to and the late Deshabandhu, who suggested the names of Sd. Kelkar and I.B. Sen respectively as their proxies. The Constitution Committee could not even once come together, but we were able to consult with each other by correspondence, and in the end presented a unanimous report. I regard this constitution with a certain measure of pride. I hold that, if we could fully work out this constitution, the mere fact of working it out would bring us Swaraj. With the assumption of this responsibility I may be said to have made my real entrance into the Congress politics.

39. THE BIRTH OF KHADI

I do not remember to have seen a handloom or a spinning wheel when in 1908 I described it in *Hind Swaraj* as the panacea for the growing pauperism of India. In that book I took it as understood that anything that helped India to get rid of the grinding poverty of her masses would in the same process also establish Swaraj. Even in 1915, when I returned to India from South Africa, I had not actually seen a spinning wheel. When the Satyagraha Ashram was founded at Sabarmati, we introduced a few handlooms there. But no sooner had we done this than we found ourselves

up against a difficulty. All of us belonged either to the liberal professions or to business; not one of us was an artisan. We needed a weaving expert to teach us to weave before we could work the looms. One was at last procured from Palanpur, but Maganlal Gandhi was not to be easily baffled. Possessed of a natural talent for mechanics, he was able fully to master the art before long, and one after another several new weavers were trained up in the Ashram.

The object that we set before ourselves was to be able to clothe ourselves entirely in cloth manufactured by our own hands. We therefore forthwith discarded the use of mill-woven cloth, and all the members of the Ashram resolved to wear hand-woven cloth made from Indian yarn only. The adoption of this practice brought us a world of experience. It enabled us to know, from direct contact, the conditions of life among the weavers, the extent of their production, the handicaps in the way of their obtaining their yarn supply, the way in which they were being made victims of fraud, and, lastly, their ever growing indebtedness. We were not in a position immediately to manufacture all the cloth for our needs. The alternative therefore was to get our cloth supply from handloom weavers. But ready-made cloth from Indian mill-yarn was not easily obtainable either from the cloth dealers or from the weavers themselves. All the fine cloth woven by the weavers was from foreign yarn, since Indian mills did not spin fine counts. Even today the outturn of higher counts by Indian mills is very limited, whilst highest counts they cannot spin at all. It was after the greatest effort that we were at last able to find some weavers who condescended to weave Swadeshi yarn for us, and only on condition that the Ashram would take up all the cloth that they might produce. By thus adopting cloth woven from mill-yarn as our wear, and propagating it among our friends, we made ourselves voluntary agents of the Indian spinning mills. This in its turn brought us into contact with the mills, and enabled us to know something about their management and their handicaps. We saw that the aim of the mills was more and more to weave the yarn spun by them: their co-operation with the handloom weaver was not willing, but unavoidable and temporary. We became impatient to be able to spin our own yarn. It was clear that, until we could do this ourselves, dependence on the mills would remain. We did not feel that we could render any service to the country by continuing as agents of Indian spinning mills.

No end of difficulties again faced us. We could get neither spinning wheel nor a spinner to teach us how to spin. We were employing some wheel for filling pearns and bobbins for weaving in the Ashram. But we

had no idea that these could be used as spinning wheels. Once Kalidas Jhaveri discovered a woman who, he said, would demonstrate to us how spinning was done. We sent to her a member of the Ashram who was known for his great versatility in learning new things. But even he returned without wresting the secret of the art.

So the time passed on, and my impatience grew with the time. I plied every chance visitor to the Ashram who was likely to possess some information about handspinning with questions about the art. But the art being confined to women and having been all but exterminated, if there was some stray spinner still surviving in some obscure corner, only a member of that sex was likely to find out her whereabouts.

In the year 1917 I was taken by my Gujarati friends to preside at the Broach Educational Conference. It was here that I discovered that remarkable lady Gangabehn Majmundar. She was a widow, but her enterprising spirit knew no bounds. Her education, in the accepted sense of the term, was not much. But in courage and commonsense she easily surpassed the general run of our educated women. She had already got rid of the curse of untouchability, and fearlessly moved among and served the suppressed classes. She had means of her own, and her needs were few. She had a well seasoned constitution, and went about everywhere without an escort. She felt quite at home on horseback. I came to know her more intimately at the Godhra Conference. To her I poured out my grief about the charkha, and she lightened my burden by a promise to prosecute an earnest and incessant search for the spinning wheel.

40. FOUND AT LAST !

At last, after no end of wandering in Gujarat, Gangabehn found the spinning wheel in Vijapur in the Baroda State. Quite a number of people there had spinning wheels in their homes, but had long since consigned them to the lofts as useless lumber. They expressed to Gangabehn their readiness to resume spinning, if someone provide them with a regular supply of slivers, and to buy the yarn spun by them. Gangabehn communicated the joyful news to me. The providing of slivers was founded to be a difficult task. On my mentioning the thing to the late Umar Sobani, he solved the difficulty by immediately undertaking to send a sufficient supply of slivers from his mill. I sent to Gangabehn the slivers received from Umar Sobani, and soon yarn began to pour in at such a rate that it became quite a problem how to cope with it.

Mr. Umar Sobani's generosity was great, but still one could not go

on taking advantage of it for ever. I felt ill at ease, continuously receiving slivers from him. Moreover, it seemed to me to be fundamentally wrong to use mill-slivers. If one could use mill-slivers, why not use mill-yarn as well ? Surely no mills supplied slivers to the ancients ? How did they make their slivers then ? With these thoughts in my mind I suggested to Gangabehn to find carders who could supply slivers. She confidently undertook the task. She engaged a carder who was prepared to card cotton. He demanded thirty-five rupees, if not much more, per month. I considered no price too high at the time. She trained a few youngsters to make slivers out of the carded cotton. I begged for cotton in Bombay. Sjt. Yashvantprasad Desai at once responded. Gangabehn's enterprise thus prospered beyond expectations. She found out weavers to weave the yarn that was spun in Vijapur, and soon Vijapur Khadi gained a name for itself.

While these developments were taking place in Vijapur, the spinning wheel gained a rapid footing in the Ashram. Maganlal Gandhi, by bringing to bear all his splendid mechanical talent on the wheel, made many improvements in it, and wheels and their accessories began to be manufactured at the Ashram. The first piece of Khadi manufactured in the Ashram cost 17 annas per yard. I did not hesitate to commend this very coarse Khadi at that rate to friends, who willingly paid the price.

I was laid up in bed at Bombay. But I was fit enough to make searches for the wheel there. At last I chanced upon two spinners. They charged one rupee for a seer of yarn, i.e., 28 tolas or nearly three quarters of a pound. I was then ignorant of the economics of Khadi. I considered no price too high for securing handspun yarn. On comparing the rates paid by me with those paid in Vijapur I found that I was being cheated. The spinners refused to agree to any reduction in their rates. So I had to dispense with their service. But they served their purpose. They taught spinning to Shrimatis Avantikabai, Ramibai Kamdar, the widowed mother of Sjt. Shankarlal Banker and Shrimati Vasumatibehn. The wheel began merrily to hum in my room, and I may say without exaggeration that its hum had no small share in restoring me to my health. I am prepared to admit that its effect was more psychological than physical. But then it only shows how powerfully the physical in man reacts to the psychological. I too set my hand to the wheel, but did not so much with it at the time.

In Bombay, again, the same old problem of obtaining a supply of hand-made slivers presented itself. A carder twanging his bow used to pass daily by Sjt. Revashankar's residence. I sent for him and learnt that he carded for slivers, but stuffing mattresses. He agreed to card for slivers, but demanded a stiff price for it, which, however, I paid. The yarn thus

prepared I disposed of to some Vaishnava friends for making from it the gariands for the pavitra ekadashi. Sjt. Shivji started a spinning class in Bombay. All these experiments involved considerable expenditure. But it was willingly defrayed by patriotic friends, lovers of the motherland, who had faith in Khadi. The money thus spent, in my humble opinion, was not wasted. It brought us a rich store of experience, and revealed to us the possibilities of the spinning wheel.

I now grew impatient for the exculsive adoption of Khadi for my dress. My dhoti was still of Indian mill cloth. The coarse Khadi manufactured in the Ashram and at Vijapur was only 30 inches in width. I gave notice to Gangabehn that, unless she provided me with a Khadi dhoti of 45 inches width within a month, I would do with coarse, short Khadi dhoti. The ultimatum came upon her as a shock. But she proved equal to the demand made upon her. Well within the month she sent me a pair of Khadi dhotis of 45 inches width, and thus relieved me from what would then have been a difficult situation for me.

At about the same time Sjt. Lakshmidas brought Sjt. Ramji, the weaver, with his wife Gangabehn from Lathi to the Ashram and got Khadi dhotis woven at the Ashram. The part played by this couple in the spread of Khadi was by no means insignificant. They initiated a host of persons in Gujarat and also outside into the art of weaving hand- spun yarn. To see Gangabehn at her loom is a stirring sight. When this unlettered but self-possessed sister plies at her loom, she becomes so lost in it that it is difficult to distract her attention, and much more difficult to draw her eyes off her beloved loom.

41. AN INSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

From its very inception the Khadi movement, Swadeshi movement as it was then called, evoked much criticism from the mill-owners. The late Umar Sobani, a capable mill-owner himself, not only gave me the benefit of his own knowledge and experience, but kept me in touch with the opinion of the other mill-owners as well. The argument advanced by one of these deeply impressed him. He pressed me to meet him. I agreed. Mr. Sobani arranged the interview. The mill-owner opened the conversation.

‘You know that there has been Swadeshi agitation before now ?’

‘Yes, I do,’ I replied.

‘You are also aware that in the days of the Partition we, the mill-owners, fully exploited the Swadeshi movement. When it was at its height,

we raised the prices of cloth, and did even worse things.'

'You, I have heard something about it, and it has grieved me.'

'I can understand your grief, but I can see no ground for it. We are not conducting our business out of philanthropy. We do it for profit, we have got to satisfy the shareholders. The price of an article is governed by the demand for it. Who can check the law of demand and supply? The bengalis should have known that their agitation was bound to send up the price of Swadeshi cloth by stimulating the demand for it.'

I interrupted: 'The Bengalis like me were trustful in their nature. They believed, in the fulness of their faith, that the mill-owners would not be so utterly selfish and unpatriotic as to betray their country in the hour of its need, and even to go the length, as they did, of fraudulently passing off foreign cloth as Swadeshi.'

'I knew your believing nature,' he rejoined; 'that is why I felt you to the trouble of coming to me, so that I might warn you against falling into the same error as these simple-hearted Bengalis.'

With these words the mill-owner beckoned to his clerk who was standing by to produce samples of the stuff that was being manufactured in his mill. Pointing to it he said: 'Look at this stuff. This is the latest variety turned out by our mill. It is meeting with a widespread demand. We manufacture it from the waste. Naturally, therefore, it is cheap. We send it as far North as the valleys of the Himalayas. We have agencies all over the country, even in places where your voice or your agents can never reach. You can thus see that we do not stand in need of more agents. Besides, you ought to know that India's production of cloth falls far short of its requirements. The question of Swadeshi, therefore, largely resolves itself into one of production. The moment we can increase our production sufficiently, and improve its quality to the necessary extent, the import of foreign cloth will automatically cease. My advice to you, therefore, is not to carry on your agitation on its present lines, but to turn your attention to the erection of fresh mills. What we need is not propaganda to inflate demand for our goods, but greater production.'

'Then, surely, you will bless my effort, if I am already engaged in that very thing?' I asked.

'How can that be?' he exclaimed, a bit puzzled, 'but may be, you are thinking of promoting the establishment of new mills, in which case you certainly deserve to be congratulated.'

'I am not doing exactly that,' I explained, 'but I am engaged in the revival of the spinning wheel.'

‘What is that ?’ he asked, feeling still more at sea. I told him all about the spinning wheel, and the story of my long quest after it, and added, ‘I am entirely of your opinion; it is no use my becoming virtually an agent for the mills. That would do more harm than good to the country. Our mills will not be in want of custom for a long time to come. My work should be, and therefore is, to organize the production of handspun cloth, and to find means for the disposal of the Khadi thus produced. I am, therefore, concentrating my attention on the production of Khadi. I swear by this form of Swadeshi, because through it I can provide work to the semi-starved, semi-employed women of India. My idea is to get these women to spin yarn, and to clothe the people of India with Khadi woven out of it. I do not know how far this movement is going to succeed, at present it is only in the incipient stage. But I have full faith in it. At any rate it can do no harm. On the contrary to the extent that it can add to the cloth production of the country, be it ever so small, it will represent so much solid gain. You will thus perceive that my movement is free from the evils mentioned by you.’

He replied, ‘If you have additional production in view in organizing your movement, I have nothing to say against it. Whether the spinning wheel can make headway in this age of power machinery is another question. But I for one wish you every success.’

42. ITS RISING TIDE

I must not devote any more chapters here to a description of the further progress of Khadi. It would be outside the scope of these chapters to give a history of my various activities after they came before the public eye, and I must not attempt it, if only because to do so would require a treatise on the subject. My object in writing these chapters is simply to describe how certain things, as it were spontaneously, presented themselves to me in the course of my experiments with truth.

To resume, then, the story of the non-co-operation movement. Whilst the powerful Khilafat agitation set up by the Ali Brothers was in full progress, I had long discussions on the subject with the late Maulana Abdul Bari and the other Ulema, especially, with regard to the extent to which a Musalman could observe the rule of non-violence. In the end they all agreed that Islam did not forbid its followers from following non-violence as a policy, and further, that, while they were pledged to that policy, they were bound faithfully to carry it out. At last the non-co-operation resolution was moved in the Khilafat conference, and carried

after prolonged deliberations. I have a vivid recollection how once at Allahabad a committee sat all night deliberating upon the subject. In the beginning the late Hakim Saheb was sceptical as to the practicability of non-violent non-co-operation. But after his scepticism was overcome he threw himself into it heart and soul, and his help proved invaluable to the movement.

Next, the non-co-operation resolution was moved by me at the Gujarat political conference that was held shortly afterwards. The preliminary contention raised by the opposition was that it was not competent to a provincial conference to adopt a resolution in advance of the Congress. As against this, I suggested that the restriction could apply only to a backward movement; but as for going forward, the subordinate organizations were not only fully competent, but were in duty bound to do so, if they had in them the necessary grit and confidence. No permission, I argued was needed to try to enhance the prestige of the parent institution, provided one did it at one's own risk. The proposition was then discussed on its merits, the debate being marked by its keenness no less than the atmosphere of 'sweet reasonableness' in which it was conducted. On the ballot being taken the resolution was declared carried by an overwhelming majority. The successful passage of the resolution was due not a little to the personality of Sjt. Vallabhbhai and Abbas Tyabji. The latter was the president, and his leanings were all in favour of the non-co-operation resolution.

The All-India Congress Committee resolved to hold a special session of the Congress in September 1920 at Calcutta to deliberate on this question. Preparations were made for it on a large scale. Lala Lajpat Rai was elected President. Congress and Khilafat specials were run to Calcutta from Bombay. At Calcutta there was a mammoth gathering of delegates and visitors.

At the request of Maulana Shaukat Ali I prepared a draft of the non-co-operation resolution in the train. Up to this time I had more or less avoided the use of the word non-violent in my drafts. I invariably made use of this word in my speeches. My vocabulary on the subject was still in process of formation. I found that I could not bring home my meaning to purely Muslim audiences with the help of the Sanskrit equivalent for non-violent. I therefore asked Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad to give me some other equivalent for it. He suggested the word *ba-aman*; similarly for non-co-operation he suggested the phrase *tark-i-mavalat*.

Thus, while I was still busy devising suitable Hindi, Gujarati and Urdu phraseology for non-co-operation, I was called upon to frame the

non-co-operation resolution for that eventful Congress. In the original draft the word 'non-violent' had been left out by me. I had handed over the draft to Maulana Shaukat Ali who was travelling in the same compartment, without noticing the omission. During the night I discovered the error. In the morning I sent Mahadev with the message that the omission should be made good before the draft was sent to the press. But I have an impression that the draft was printed before the insertion could be made. The Subjects Committee was to have met the same evening. I had therefore to make the necessary correction in the printed copies of the draft. I afterwards saw that there would have been great difficulty, had I not been ready with my draft.

Nonetheless my plight was pitiable indeed. I was absolutely at sea as to who would support the resolution and who would oppose it. Nor had I any idea as to the attitude that Lalaji would adopt. I only saw an imposing phalanx of veteran warriors assembled for the fray at Calcutta, Dr. Besant, Pandit Malaviyaji, Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari, Pandit Motilalji and the Deshabandhu being some of them.

In my resolution non-co-operation was postulated only with a view to obtaining redress of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. That, however, did not appeal to Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari. 'If non-co-operation was to be declared, why should it be with reference to particular wrongs ? The absence of Swaraj was the biggest wrong that the non-co-operation should be directed,' he argued. Pandit Motilalji also wanted the demand for Swaraj to be included in the resolution. I readily accepted the suggestion and incorporated the demand for Swaraj in my resolution, which was passed after an exhaustive, serious and somewhat stormy discussion.

Motilalji was the first to join the movement. I still remember the sweet discussion that I had with him on the resolution. He suggested some changes in its phraseology which I adopted. He undertook to win the Deshabandhu for the movement. The Deshabandhu's heart was inclined towards it, but he felt sceptical as to the capacity of the people to carry out the programme. It was only at the Nagpur Congress that he and Lalaji accepted it whole heartedly.

I felt the loss of the late Lokamanya very deeply at the special session. It has been my firm faith to this day that, had the Lokamanya been then alive, he would have given his benedictions to me on that occasion. But even if it had been otherwise, and he had opposed the movement, I should still have esteemed his opposition as a privilege and an education for myself. We had our differences of opinion always, but they never led to bitterness. He always allowed me to believe that the ties between us were

of the closest. Even as I write these lines, the circumstances of his death stand forth vividly before my mind's eye. It was about the hour of midnight, when Patwardhan, who was then working with me, conveyed over the telephone the news of his death. I was at that time surrounded by my companions. Spontaneously the exclamation escaped my lips, 'My strongest bulwark is gone.' The non-co-operation movement was then in full swing, and I was eagerly looking forward to encouragement and inspiration from him. What his attitude would have been with regard to the final phase of non-cooperation will always be a matter of speculation, and an idle one at that. But this much is certain that the deep void left by his death weighed heavily upon everybody present at Calcutta. Everyone felt the absence of his counsels in that hour of crisis in the nation's history.

43. AT NAGPUR

The resolutions adopted at the Calcutta special session of the Congress were to be confirmed at its annual session at Nagpur. Here again, as at Calcutta there was a great rush of visitors and delegates. The number of delegates in the Congress had not been limited yet. As a result, so far as I can remember, the figure on this occasion reached about fourteen thousand. Lalaji pressed for a slight amendment to the clause about the boycott of schools, which I accepted. Similarly some amendments were made at the instance of the Deshabandhu, after which the non-co-operation resolution was passed unanimously.

The resolution regarding the revision of the Congress constitution too was to be taken up at this session of the Congress. The sub-committee's draft was presented at the Calcutta special session. The matter had therefore been thoroughly ventilated and thrashed out. At the Nagpur session, where it came up for final disposal, Sjt. C. Vijayaraghavachari was the President. The Subjects Committee passed the draft with only one important change. In my draft the number of delegates had been fixed, I think, at 1,500 ; the Subjects Committee substituted in its place the figure 6,000. In my opinion this increase was the result of hasty judgment, and experience of all these years has only confirmed me in my view. I hold it to be an utter delusion to believe that a large number of delegates is in any way a help to the better conduct of the business, or that it safeguards the principle of democracy. Fifteen hundred delegates, jealous of the interests of the people, broad-minded and truthful, would any day be a better safeguard for democracy than six thousand irresponsible men chosen anyhow. To safeguard democracy the people

must have a keen sense of independence, self-respect and their oneness, and should insist upon choosing as their representatives only such persons as are good and true. But obsessed with the idea of numbers as the Subjects Committee was, it would have liked to go even beyond the figure of six thousand. The limit of six thousand was therefore in the nature of a compromise.

The question of the goal of the Congress formed a subject for keen discussion. In the constitution that I had presented, the goal of the Congress was the attainment of Swaraj within the British Empire if possible and without if necessary. A party in the Congress wanted to limit the goal to Swaraj within the British Empire only. Its view- point was put forth by Pandit Malaviyaji and Mr. Jinnah. But they were not able to get many votes. Again the draft constitution provided that the means for the attainment were to be peaceful and legitimate. This condition too came in for opposition, it being contended that there should be no restriction upon the means to be adopted. But the Congress adopted the original draft after an instructive and frank discussion. I am of opinion that, if this constitution had been worked out by the people honestly, intelligently and zealously, it would have become a potent instrument of mass education, and the very process of working it out would have brought us Swaraj. But a discussion of the theme would be irrelevant here.

Resolutions about Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability and Khadi too were passed in this Congress, and since then the Hindu members of the Congress have taken upon themselves the responsibility of ridding Hinduism of the curse of untouchability, and the Congress has established a living bond of relationship with the 'skeletons' of India through Khadi. The adoption of non-co-operation for the sake of the Khilafat was itself a great practical attempt made by the Congress to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity.

FAREWELL

The time has now come to bring these chapters to a close.

My life from this point onward has been so public that there is hardly anything about it that people do not know. Moreover, since 1921 I have worked in such close association with the Congress leaders that I can hardly describe any episode in my life since then without referring to my relations with them. For though Shraddhanandji, the Deshabandhu, Hakim Saheb and Lalaji are no more with us today, we have the good luck to have a host of other veteran Congress leaders still living and working in

our midst. The history of the Congress, since the great changes in it that I have described above, is still in the making. And my principal experiments during the past seven years have all been made through the Congress. A reference to my relations with the leaders would therefore be unavoidable, if I set about describing my experiments further. And this I may not do, at any rate for the present, if only from a sense of propriety. Lastly, my conclusions from my current experiments can hardly as yet be regarded as decisive. It therefore seems to me to be my plain duty to close this narrative here. In fact my pen instinctively refuses to proceed further.

It is not without a wrench that I have to take leave of the reader. I set a high value on my experiments. I do not know whether I have been able to do justice to them. I can only say that I have spared no pains to give a faithful narrative. To describe truth, as it has appeared to me, and in the exact manner in which I have arrived at it, has been my ceaseless effort. The exercise has given me ineffable mental peace, because, it has been my fond hope that it might bring faith in Truth and Ahimsa to waverers.

My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters does not proclaim to the reader that the only means for the realization of Truth is Ahimsa, I shall deem all my labour in writing these chapters to have been in vain. And, even though my efforts in this behalf may prove fruitless, let the readers know that the vehicle, not the great principle, is at fault. After all, however sincere my strivings after Ahimsa may have been, they have still been imperfect and inadequate. The little fleeting glimpses, therefore, that I have been able to have of Truth can hardly convey an idea of the indescribable lustre of Truth, a million times more intense than that of the sun we daily see with our eyes. In fact what I have caught is only the faintest glimmer of that mightly effulgence. But this much I can say with assurance, as a result of all my experiments, that a perfect vision of Truth can only follow a complete realization of Ahimsa.

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.

Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of Ahimsa

must remain an empty dream; God can never be realized by one who is not pure of heart. Self-purification therefore must mean purification in all the walks of life. And purification being highly infectious, purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings.

But the path of self-purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion. I know that I have not in me as yet that triple purity, in spite of constant ceaseless striving for it. That is why the world's praise fails to move me, indeed it very often stings me. To conquer the subtle passions to me to be harder far than the physical conquest of the world by the force of arms. Ever since my return to India I have had experience of the dormant passions lying hidden within me. The knowledge of them has made me feel humiliated though not defeated. The experiences and experiments have sustained me and given me great joy. But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as a man does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him. Ahimsa is the farthest limit of humility. .

In bidding farewell to the reader, for the time being at any rate, I ask him to join with me in prayer to the God of Truth that He may grant me the boon of Ahimsa in mind, word and deed.

Book—2

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1. THE CONGRESS AND ITS OFFICIALS

Reader: Just at present there is a Home Rule wave passing over India. All our countrymen appear to be pining for National Independence. A similar spirit pervades them even in South Africa. Indians seem to be eager to acquire rights, Will you explain your views in this matter?

Editor: You have put the question well, but the answer is not easy. One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand popular feeling and to give expression to it, another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments, and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects. The exercise of all these three functions is involved in answering your question. To a certain extent the people's will has to be expressed, certain sentiments will need to be fostered, and defects will have to be brought to light. But, as you have asked the question, it is my duty to answer it.

Reader: Do you then consider that a desire for Home Rule has been created among us?

Editor: That desire gave rise to the National Congress. The choice of the word "National" implies it.

Reader: That surely, is not the case. Young India seems to ignore the Congress. It is considered to be an instrument for perpetuating British Rule.

Editor: That opinion is not justified. Had not the Grand Old Man of India prepared the soil, our young men could not have even spoken about Home Rule. How can we forget what Mr. Hume has written, how he has lashed us into action, and with what effort he has awakened us, in order to achieve the objects of the Congress? Sir William Wedderburn has given his body, mind and money to the same cause. His writings are worthy of perusal to this day. Professor Gokhale in order to prepare the nation, embraced poverty and gave twenty years of his life. Even now, he is living in poverty. The late Justice Budruddin Tyebji was also one of those who, through the Congress, sowed the seed of Home Rule. Similarly, in Bengal, Madras the Punjab and other places, there have been lovers of India and members of the Congress, both Indian and English.

Reader: Stay, stay, you are going too far, you are straying away from my question. I have asked you about Home or Self-Rule; you are discussing foreign rule. I do not desire to bear English names, and you are giving me such names. In these circumstances, I do not think we can ever meet. I shall be pleased if you will confine yourself to Home Rule. All other talk will not satisfy me.

Editor: You are impatient. I cannot afford to be likewise. If you will bear with me for a while. I think you will find that you will obtain what you want. Remember the old proverb that the tree does not grow in one day. The fact that you have checked me and that you do not want to bear about the well-wishers of India shows that, for you at any rate, Home Rule is yet far away. If we had many like you, we would never make any advance. This thought is worthy of your attention.

Reader: It seems to me that you simply want to put me off by talking round and round. Those whom you consider to be well-wishers of India are not such in my estimation. Why, then, should I listen to your discourse on such people? What has he whom you consider to be the Father of the Nation done for it? He says that the English Governors will do justice and that we should co-operate with them.

Editor: I must tell you, with all gentleness that it must be a matter of shame for us that you should speak about that great man in terms of disrespect. Just look at his work. He has dedicated his life to the service of India. We have learned what we know from him. It was the respected Dadabhai who taught us that the English had sucked our lifeblood. What does it matter that, today, his trust is still in the English nation! Is Dadabhai less to be honored because, in the exuberance of youth, we are prepared to go a step further? Are we, on that account, wiser than he? it is a mark of wisdom not to kick away the very step from which we have risen higher. The removal of a step from a staircase brings down the whole of it. When, out of infancy, we grow into youth, we do not despise infancy, but, on the contrary, we recall with affection the days of our childhood. If, after many years of study, a teacher were to teach me something, and if I were to build a little more on the foundation laid by that teacher, I would not, on that account, be considered wiser than the teacher. He would always command my respect. Such is the case with the Grand Old Man of India. We must admit that he is the author of nationalism.

Reader: You have spoken well. I can now understand that we must look upon Mr. Dadabhai with respect. Without him and men like him, we should probably not have the spirit that fires us. How can the same be said of Professor Gokhale? He has constituted himself a great friend of

the English., he says that we have to learn a great deal from them, that we have to learn their political wisdom, before we can talk of Home Rule. I am tired of reading his speeches.

Editor: If you are tired, it only betrays your impatience. We believe that those, who are discontented with the slowness of their parents and are angry because the parents would not run with their children, are considered disrespectful to their parents. Professor Gokhale occupies the place of a parent. What does it matter if he cannot run with us? A nation that is desirous of securing Home Rule cannot afford to despise its ancestors. We shall become useless, if we lack respect for our elders. Only men with mature thoughts are capable of ruling themselves and not the hasty-tempered. Moreover, how many Indians were there like Professor Gokhale. when he gave himself to Indian education? I verify believe that whatever Professor Gokhale does, he does with pure motives and with a view of serving India. His devotion to the Motherland is so great that he would give his life for it, if necessary. Whatever he says is said not to flatter anyone but because he believes it to be true. We are bound, therefore to entertain the highest regard for him.

Reader: Are we, then, to follow him in every respect?

Editor: I never said any such thing. If we conscientiously differed from him, the learned Professor himself would advise us to follow the dictates of our conscience rather than him. Our chief purpose is not to decry his work, but to believe that he is infinitely greater than we are, and to feel assured that compared, with his work for India, ours is infinitesimal. Several newspaper write disrespectfully of him. It is our duty against such writings. We should consider men like Professor Gokhale to be the pillars of Home Rule. It is bad habit to say that another man's thoughts are bad and ours only. are good and that those holding different view's from ours are the enemies of the country.

Reader: I now begin to understand somewhat your meaning, I shall have to think the matter over. But what you say about Mr. Hume and Sir William Wedderburn is beyond my comprehension.

Editor: The same rule holds good for the English as for the Indians. I can never subscribe to the statement that all Englishmen are bad. Many Englishmen desire Home Rule for India. That the English people are somewhat more selfish than others is true, but that does not prove that every Englishman is bad. We who seek justice will have to do justice to others. Sir William does not wish ill to India that should be enough for us. As we proceed, you will see that, if we act justly India will be sooner free. You will see, too, that if we shun every Englishman as an enemy,

Home Rule will be delayed. But if we are just to them, we shall receive their support in our progress towards the goal.

Reader: All this seems to me at present to be simply nonsensical. English support and the obtaining of Home Rule are two contradictory things. How can the English people tolerate Home Rule for us? But I do not want you to decide this question for me just yet. To spend time over it is useless. When you have shown how we can have Home Rule, perhaps I shall understand your views. You have prejudiced against you by discoursing on English help. I, would, therefore, beseech you not to continue on this subject.

Editor: I have no desire to do so. That you are prejudiced against me is not a matter for much anxiety. It is well that I should say unpleasant things at the commencement. It is my duty patiently to try to remove your prejudice.

Reader: I like that last statement. It emboldens me to say what I like. One thing still puzzles me. I do not understand how the Congress laid the foundation of Home Rule.

Editor: Let us see. The Congress brought together Indians from different parts of India, and enthused us with the idea of nationality. The government used to look upon it with disfavor. The Congress has always insisted the nation should control revenue and expenditure. It has always desired self-government after Canadian model. Whether we can get it or not, whether we desire it or not, and whether there is not something more desirable, are different questions. All I have to show is that the Congress gave us a foretaste of Home rule. To deprive it of the honor is not proper, and for us to do so would not only be ungrateful, but retard the fulfillment of our object. To treat the Congress as an institution inimical to our growth as a nation would disable us from using that body.

2. THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

Reader: Considering the matter as you put it, it seems proper to say that the foundation of Home Rule was laid by the Congress. But you will admit that this cannot be considered a real awakening. When and how did the real awakening take place?

Editor: The seed is never seen. It works underneath the ground. It itself destroyed, and the tree which rises above the ground is alone seen. Such is the case with the Congress. Yet, what you call the real awakening took place after the Partition of Bengal. For this we have to be thankful to Lord Curzon. At the time of the Partition, the people of Bengal reasoned

with Lord Curzon, but in the pride of power he disregarded all their prayers. He took it for granted that Indians could only prattle, that they could never take any effective steps. He used insulting language, and in the teeth of all opposition partitioned Bengal. That day may be considered to be the day of the partition of the British Empire. The shock the British power received through the Partition has never been equaled by any other act. This does not mean that the other injustices done to India are less glaring than that done by the Partition. The salt-tax is not a small injustice. We shall see many such things later on. But the people were ready to resist the Partition. At that time feeling ran high. Many leading Bengalis were ready to lose their all. They knew their power; hence the conflagration. It is now well-nigh unquenchable; it is not necessary to quench it either. The Partition will go, Bengal will be reunited, but the rift in the English barque will remain; it must daily widen. India awakened is not likely to fall asleep. The demand for the abrogation of the Partition is tantamount to a demand for Home Rule. Leaders in Bengal know this. British officials realize it. That is why the Partition still remains. As time passes, the Nation is being forged. Nations are not formed in a day; the formation requires years.

Reader: What, in your opinion, are the results of the Partition?

Editor: Hitherto we have considered that for redress of grievances we must approach the throne and if we get no redress we must sit still, except that we may still petition. After the Partition, people saw that petitions must be backed up by force and that they must be capable of suffering. This new spirit must be considered to be the chief result of the Partition. That spirit was seen in the outspoken writings in the Press. That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and to be written publicly. The Swadeshi movement was inaugurated. People, young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face. It now no longer awes them. They do not fear even a row or being imprisoned. Some of the best sons of India are at present in banishment. This is something different from mere petitioning. Thus are the people moved. The spirit generated in Bengal has spread in the north to the Punjab, and in the south to Cape Comorin.

Reader: Do you suggest any other striking result?"

Editor: The Partition has not only made a rift in the English ship but has made it in ours also. Great events always produce great results. Our leaders are divided into two parties: the Moderates and the Extremists. These may be considered as the slow party and the impatient party. Some call the Moderates the timid party and the Extremists the bold party. All

interpret the two words according to their preconceptions. This much is certain that there has arisen an enmity between the two. The one distrusts the other and imputes motives. At the time of the Surat Congress there was almost a fight. I think that this division is not a good thing for the country, but I think also that such divisions will not last long. It all depends upon the leaders how long they will last.

3. DISCONTENT AND UNREST

Reader: Then you consider the Partition to be a cause of the awakening? Do you welcome the unrest which has resulted from it?

Editor: When a man rises from sleep, he twists his limbs and is restless. It takes some time before he is entirely awakened. Similarly, although the Partition has caused an awakening, the comatose condition has not yet disappeared. We are still twisting our limbs and are still restless, and just as the state between sleep and awakening must be considered to be necessary, so may the present unrest in India be considered a necessary and therefore, a proper state. The knowledge that there is unrest will, it is highly probable, enable us to outgrow it. Rising from sleep, we do not continue in a comatose state, but according to our ability, sooner or later, we are completely restored to our senses. So shall we be free from the present unrest which no one likes.

Reader: What is the other form of unrest?

Editor: Unrest is, in reality, discontent. The latter is only now described as unrest. During the Congress-period it was labeled discontent. Mr. Hume always said that the spread of discontent in India was necessary. This discontent is a very useful thing. As long as a man is contented with his present lot, so long is it difficult to persuade him to come out of it. Therefore it is that every reform must be preceded by discontent. We throw away things we have, only then we cease to like them. Such discontent has been produced among us after reading the great works of Indians and Englishmen. Discontent has led to unrest, and the latter has brought about many deaths, many imprisonments, many banishments. Such a state of things will still continue. It must be so. All these may be considered good signs but they may also lead to bad results.

4. WHAT IS SWARAJ?

Reader: I have now learnt what the Congress has done to make India one nation, how the partition has caused an awakening, and how

discontent and unrest have spread through the land. I would now like to know your views on Swaraj. I fear that our interpretation is not the same as yours.

Editor: It is quite possible that we do not attach the same meaning to the term. You and I and all Indians are impatient to attain Swaraj, but we are certainly not decided as to what it is. To drive the English out of India is a thought heard from many mouths, but it does not seem that many have properly considered why it should be so. I must ask you a question. Do you think that it is necessary to drive away English if we get all we want?

Reader: I should ask of them only one thing, that is: "Please leave our country." If, after they have complied with this request, their withdrawal from India means that they are still in India. I should have no objection. Then we would understand that, in their language, the word "gone" is equivalent to "remained".

Editor: Well then, let us suppose that the English have retired. What will you do then?

Reader: That question cannot be answered at this stage. The state after withdrawal will depend largely upon the manner of it. If, as you assume, they retire for the asking we should have an army, etc., ready at hand. We should, therefore, have no difficulty in carrying on the Government.

Editor: You may think so; I do not. But I will not discuss the matter just now. I have to answer your question, and that I can do well by asking you several questions. Why do you want to drive away the English?

Reader: Because India has become impoverished by their government. They take away our money from year to year. The most important posts are reserved for themselves. We are kept in a state of slavery. They behave insolently towards us and disregard our feelings.

Editor: If they do not take our money away, become gentle, and give us responsible posts, you would still consider their presence to be harmful?

Reader: That question is useless. It is similar to the question whether there is any harm in associating with a tiger if he changes his nature. Such a question is sheer waste of time. When a tiger changes his nature, Englishmen will change theirs. This is not possible, and to believe it to be possible is contrary to human experience.

Editor: Supposing we get Self-Government similar what the Canadians and the South-Africans have, will it be good enough?

Reader: That question also is useless. We may get it when we have the same powers; we shall then hoist our own flag. As is Japan, so must India be. We must own our navy, our army, and we must have our own splendor, and then will India's voice ring through the world.

Editor: You have drawn the picture well. In effect it means this: that we want English rule without the Englishman. You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger; that is to say, you would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englishtan. This is not the Swaraj I want.

Reader: I have placed before you my idea of Swaraj as I think it should be. If the education we have received be of any use, if the works of Spencer, Mill and others be of any importance, and if the English Parliament be the Mother of Parliaments, I certainly think that we should copy the English people, and this is to such an extent that, just as they do not allow others to obtain footing in their country, so we should not allow them or others to obtain it in ours. What they have done in their country has not been done in any other country. It is, therefore proper for us to import their institutions. But now I want to know your views.

Editor: There is need for patience. My views will develop of themselves in the course of this discourse. It is as difficult for me to understand the true nature of Swaraj as it seems to you to be easy. I shall therefore, for the time being, content myself with endeavoring to show that what you call Swaraj is not truly Swaraj.

5. THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND

Reader: Then from your statement I deduce that the Government of England is not desirable, and not worth copying by us.

Editor: Your deduction is justified. The condition of England at present is pitiable. I pray to God that India may never be in that plight. That which you consider to be the Mother of Parliaments is like a sterile woman and a prostitute. Both these are harsh terms, but exactly fit the case. That Parliament has not yet, of its own accord done a single good thing. Hence I have compared it to a sterile woman. The natural condition of that Parliament is such that, without outside pressure, it can do nothing. It is like a prostitute because it is under the control of ministers who change from time to time. Today it is under Mr. Asquith tomorrow it may be under Mr. Balfour.

Reader: You have said this sarcastically. The term "sterile woman" is not applicable. The Parliament being elected by the people, must work under public pressure. This is its quality.

Editor: You are mistaken. Let us examine it a little more closely. The best men are supposed to be elected by, the people. The members serve without pay and therefore it must be assumed only for the, public weal. The electors are considered to be educated and therefore we should assume that they would not generally-make mistakes in their choice. Such a Parliament should not need the spur of petitions or any other pressure. Its work should be so smooth that its effects would be more apparent day by day. But, as a matter of fact, it is generally acknowledged that the members are hypocritical and selfish. Each thinks of his own little interest. It is fear that is the guiding motive. What is done today may be undone tomorrow. It is not possible to recall a single instance in which finality can be predicted for its work. When the greatest questions are debated, its members have been seen to stretch themselves and to doze. Sometimes the members talk away until the listeners are disgusted. Carlyle has called it the "talking shop of the world." Members vote for their party without a thought. Their so-called discipline binds them to it. If any member by way of exception gives an independent vote, he is considered a renegade. If the money and the time wasted by Parliament were entrusted to a few good men, the English nation would be occupying today a much higher platform. Parliament is simply a costly toy of the nation. These views are by no means peculiar to me. Some great English thinkers have expressed them. One of the members of that Parliament recently said that a true Christian could not become a member of it. Another said that it was a baby. And if it has remained a baby after an existence of seven hundred years, when will it outgrow its babyhood?

Reader: You have set me thinking. You do not expect me to accept at once all you say. You give me entirely novel views. I shall have to digest them. Will you now explain the epithet "prostitute"?

Editor: That You cannot accept my views at once is only right. If you will read the literature on this subject you will have some idea of it. Parliament is without a real master. Under the Prime Minister, its movement is not steady, but it is buffeted about like a prostitute. The Prime Minister is more concerned about his power than about the welfare of Parliament. His energy is concentrated upon securing the success of his party. His care is not always that Parliament shall do right. Prime Ministers are known to have made Parliament do things merely for party advantage. All this is worth thinking over.

Reader: Then you are really attacking the very men whom we have hitherto considered to be patriotic and honest?.

Editor: Yes, that is true. I can have nothing against Prime Ministers, but what I have seen leads me to think that they cannot be considered really patriotic. If they are to be considered honest because they do not take what are generally known as bribery, let them 'be so considered, but they are open to subtler influences. In order to gain their ends, they certainly bribe people with honors. I do not hesitate to say that they have neither real honesty nor a living conscience.

Reader: As you express these views about Parliament" I would like to bear you on the English people, so that I may have your view of their Government.

Editor: To the English voters their newspaper is their Bible. They take their cue from their newspapers which are often dishonest. The same fact is differently interpreted by different newspapers, according to the party in whose interests they are edited. One newspaper would consider a great Englishman to be a paragon of honesty, another would consider him dishonest. What must be the condition of the people whose newspapers are of this type?

Reader: You shall describe it.

Editor: These people change their views frequently. It is said that they change them every seven years. These views swing like the pendulum of a clock and are never steadfast. The people would follow a powerful orator or a man who gives them parties, receptions, etc. As are the people, so is their Parliament. They have certainly, one quality very strongly developed. They will never allow, their country, to be lost. If any person were to cast an evil eye on it, they would pluck out his eyes. But that does not 'mean that the nation possesses every other virtue or that it should be imitated. If India copies England, it is my firm conviction that she will be ruined.

Reader: To what do you ascribe this state of England?

Editor: It is not due to any peculiar fault of the English people, but the condition is due to modern civilization. It is a civilization only in name. Under it the nations of Europe are becoming degraded and ruined day by day.

6. CIVILIZATION

Reader: Now you will have to explain what you mean by civilization.

Editor: It is not a question of what I mean. Several English writers refuse to call that civilization which passes under that name. Many books have been written upon that subject. Societies have been formed to cure

the nation of the evils of civilization. A great English writer has written a work called *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*. Therein he has called it a disease.

Reader: Why do we not know this generally?

Editor: The answer is very simple. We rarely find people arguing against themselves. Those who are intoxicated by modern civilization are not likely to write against it. Their care will be to find out facts and arguments in support of it, and this they do unconsciously believing it to be true. A man whilst he is dreaming, believes in his dream; he is undeceived only when he is awakened from his sleep. A man laboring under the bane of civilization is like a dreaming man. What we usually read are the works of defenders of modern civilization, which undoubtedly claims among its votaries very brilliant and even some very good men. Their writings hypnotize us, And so, one by one, we are drawn into the vortex.

Reader: This seems to be very plausible. Now will you tell me something of what you have read and thought of this civilization?

Editor: Let us first consider what state of things is described by the word "civilization". Its true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. We will take sonic examples. The people of Europe today live in better-build houses than they did a hundred years ago. This is considered an emblem of civilization, and this is also a matter to promote bodily happiness. Formerly, they wore skins, and used spears as their weapons. Now, they wear long trousers, and, for embellishing their bodies, they wear a variety of clothing, and, instead of spears, they carry with them revolvers containing five or more chambers. If people of a certain country, who have hitherto not been in the habit of wearing much clothing, boots, etc., adopt European clothing, they are supposed to have become civilized out of savagery. Formerly, in Europe, people ploughed their lands mainly by manual labor. Now, one man can plough a vast tract by means of steam engines and can thus amass great wealth. This is called a sign of civilization. Formerly, only a few men wrote valuable books. Now, anybody writes and prints anything he likes and poisons people's minds. Formerly, men traveled in wagons. Now, they fly through the air in trains at the rate of four hundred and more miles per day. This is considered the height of civilization. It has been stated that, as men progress, they shall be able to travel in airship and reach any part, of the world in a few hours. Men will not need the use of their hands and feet. They will press a button, and they will have their clothing by their side. They will press another button, and they will have

their newspaper. A third, and a motor-car will be in waiting for them. They will have a variety of delicately dished up food. Everything will be done by machinery. Formerly, when people wanted to fight with one another, they measured between them their bodily strength; now it is possible to take away thousands of lives by one man working behind a gun from a hill. This is civilization. Formerly, men worked in the open air only as much as they liked. Now thousands of workmen meet together and for the sake of maintenance work in factories or mines. Their condition is worse than that of beasts. They are obliged to work, at the risk of their lives, at most dangerous occupations, for the sake of millionaires. Formerly, men were made slaves under physical compulsion. Now they are enslaved by temptation of money and of the luxuries that money can buy. There are now diseases of which people never dreamt before, and an army of doctors is engaged in finding out their cures, and so hospitals have increased. This is a test of civilization. Formerly, special messengers were required and much expense was incurred in order to send letters; today, anyone can abuse his fellow by means of a letter for one penny. True, at the same cost, one can send one's thanks also. Formerly, people had two or three meals consisting of home-made bread and vegetables; now, they require something to eat every two hours so that they have hardly leisure for anything else. What more need I say? All this you can ascertain from several authoritative books. These are all true tests of civilization. And if anyone speaks to the contrary, know that he is ignorant. This civilization takes note neither of morality nor of religion. Its votaries calmly state that their business is not to teach religion. Some even consider it to be a superstitious growth. Others put on the cloak of religion, and prate about morality. But, after twenty years' experience, I have come to the conclusion that immorality is often taught in the name of morality. Even a child can understand that in all I have described above there can be no inducement to morality. Civilization seeks to increase bodily comforts, and it fails miserably even in doing so.

This civilization is irreligion, and it has taken such a hold on the people in Europe that those who are in it appear to be half mad. They lack real physical strength or courage. They keep up their energy by intoxication. They can hardly be happy in solitude. Women, who should be the queens of households, wander in the streets or they slave away in factories. For the sake of a pittance, half a million women in England alone are laboring under trying circumstances in factories or similar institutions. This awful act is one of the causes of the daily growing suffragette movement.

This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed. According to the teaching of Mohammed this would be considered a Satanic Civilization. Hinduism calls it a Black Age. I cannot give you an adequate conception of it. It is eating into the vitals of the English nation. It must be shunned. Parliaments are really emblems of slavery. If you will sufficiently think over this, you will entertain the same opinion and cease to blame the English. They rather deserve our sympathy. They are a shrewd nation and I therefore believe that they will cast off the evil. They are enterprising and industrious, and their mode of thought is not inherently immoral. Neither are they bad at heart. I therefore respect them. Civilization is not an incurable disease, but it should never be forgotten that the English are at present afflicted by it.

7. WHY WAS INDIA LOST?

Reader: You have said much about civilization-enough to make me ponder over it. I do not now know what I should adopt and what I should avoid from the nations of Europe, but one question comes to my lips immediately. If civilization is a disease and if it has attacked England, why has she been able to take India. and why is she able to retain it?

Editor: Your question is not very difficult to answer, and we shall presently be able to examine the true nature of Swaraj; for I am aware that I have still to answer that question. I will, however, take up your previous question. The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them. Let us now see whether these propositions can be sustained. They came to our country originally for purposes of trade. Recall the Company Bahadur. Who made it Bahadur? They had not the slightest intention at the time of establishing a kingdom. Who assisted the Company's officers'? Who was tempted at the sight of their silver? Who bought their goods? History testifies that we did all this. In order to become rich all at once we welcomed the Company's officers with open arms. We assisted them. If I am in the habit of drinking bhang and a seller thereof sells it to me, am I to blame him or myself'? By blaming the seller shall I be able to avoid the habit? And, if a particular retailer is driven away will not another take his place? A true servant of India will have to go to the root of the matter. If an excess of food has caused me indigestion, I shall certainly not avoid it by blaming water. He is a true physician who probes the cause of disease, and if you pose as a physician for the disease of India, you will have to find out its true cause.

Reader: You are right. Now I think you will not have to argue much with me to drive your conclusions home. I am impatient to know your further views. We are now on a most interesting topic. I shall, therefore, endeavor to follow your thought, and stop you when I am in doubt.

Editor: I am afraid that, in spite of your enthusiasm, as we proceed further, we shall have differences of opinion. Nevertheless, I shall argue only when you stop me. We have already seen that the English merchants were able to get a footing in India because we encouraged them. When our Princes fought among themselves, they sought the assistance of Company Bahadur. That corporation was versed alike in commerce and war. It was unhampered by questions of morality. Its object was to increase its commerce and to make money. It accepted our assistance, and increased the number of its warehouses. To protect the latter it employed an army which was utilized by us also. Is it not then useless to blame the English for what we did at that time? The Hindus and the Mohammedans were at daggers drawn. This, too, gave the Company its opportunity and thus we created the circumstances that gave the Company its control over India. Hence it is truer to say that we gave India to the English than that India was lost.

Reader: Will you now tell me how they are able to retain India?

Editor: The causes that gave them India enable them to retain it. Some Englishmen state that they took and they hold India by the sword. Both these statements are wrong. The sword is entirely useless for holding India. We alone keep them. Napoleon is said to have described the English as a nation of shopkeepers. It is a fitting description. They hold whatever dominions they have for the sake of their commerce. Their army and their navy are intended to protect it. When the Transvaal offered no such attractions, the late Mr. Gladstone discovered that it was not right for the English to hold it. When it became a paying proposition, resistance led to war. Mr. Chamberlain soon discovered that England enjoyed a suzerainty over the Transvaal. It is related that someone asked the late President Kruger whether there was gold in the moon. He replied that it was highly unlikely because, if there were, the English would have annexed it. Many problems can be solved by remembering that money is their God. Then it follows that we keep the English in India for our base self-interest. We like their commerce; they please us by their subtle methods and get what they want from us. To blame them for this is to perpetuate their power. We further strengthen their hold by quarrelling amongst ourselves. If you accept the above statements, it is proved that the English entered India for the purposes of trade. They remain in it for the same purpose and we

help them to do so. Their arms and ammunition are perfectly useless. In this connection I remind you that it is the British flag which is waving in Japan and not the Japanese. The English have a treaty with Japan for the sake of their commerce, and you will see that if they can manage it, their commerce will greatly expand in that country. They wish to convert the whole world into a vast market for their goods. That they cannot do so is true, but the blame will not be theirs. They will leave no stone unturned to reach the goal.

8. THE CONDITION OF INDIA

Reader: I now understand why the English hold India. I should like to know your views about the condition of our country.

Editor: It is a sad condition. In thinking of it my eyes water and my throat gets parched. I have grave doubts whether I shall be able sufficiently to explain what is in my heart. It is my deliberate opinion that India is being ground down, not under the English heel, but under that of modern civilization. It is groaning under the monster's terrible weight. There is yet time to escape it, but every day makes it more and more difficult. Religion is dear to me and my first complaint is that India is becoming irreligious. Here, I am not thinking of the Hindu or the Mohammedan or the Zoroastrian religion but of that religion which underlies all religions. We are turning away from God.

Reader: How so?

Editor: There is a charge laid against us that we are a lazy people and that Europeans are industrious and enterprising. We have accepted the charge and we therefore wish to change our condition. Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and all other religions teach that we should remain passive about worldly pursuits and active about godly pursuits, that we should set a limit to our worldly ambition and that our religious ambition should be illimitable. Our activity should be directed into the latter channel.

Reader: You seem to be encouraging religious charlatanism. Many a cheat has, by talking in a similar strain, led the people astray.

Editor: You are bringing an unlawful charge against religion. Humbug there, undoubtedly, is about all religions. Where there is light, there is also shadow. I am prepared to maintain that humbugs in worldly matters are far worse than the humbugs in religion. The humbug of civilization that I am endeavoring to show to you is not to be found in religion.

Reader: How can you say that? In the name of religion Hindus and Mohammedans fought against one another. For the same cause Christians fought Christians. Thousands of innocent men have been murdered, thousands have been burned and tortured in its name. Surely, this is much worse than any civilization.

Editor: I certainly submit that the above hardships are far more bearable than those of civilization. Everybody understands that the cruelties you have named are not part of religion although they have been practiced in its name; therefore there is no aftermath to these cruelties. They will always happen so long as there are to be found ignorant and credulous people. But there is no end to the victims destroyed in the fire of civilization. Its deadly effect is that people come under its scorching flames believing it to be all good. They become utterly irreligious and, in reality, derive little advantage from the world. Civilization is like a mouse gnawing while it is soothing us. When its full effect is realized, we shall see that religious superstition is harmless compared to that of modern civilization. I am not pleading for a continuance of religious superstitions. We shall certainly fight them tooth and nail, but we can never do so by disregarding religion. We can only do so by appreciating and conserving the latter.

Reader: Then you will contend that the Pax Britannica is a useless encumbrance?

Editor: You may see peace if you like; I see none.

Reader: You make light of the terror that the Thugs, the Pindaris and the Bhils were to the country.

Editor: If you give the matter some thought, you will see that the terror was by no means such a mighty thing. If it had been a very substantial thing, the other people would have died away before the English advent. Moreover, the present peace is only nominal, for by it we have become emasculated and cowardly. We are not to assume that the English have changed the nature of the Pindaris and the Bhils. It is, therefore, better to suffer the Pindari peril than that someone else should protect us from it and thus render us effeminate. I should prefer to be killed by the arrow of a Bhil than to seek unmanly protection. India without such protection was an India full of valor. Macaulay betrayed gross ignorance when he labeled Indians as being practically cowards. They never merited the charge. Cowards living in a country inhabited by hardy mountaineers and infested by wolves and tigers must surely find an early grave. Have you ever visited our fields? I assure you that our agriculturists sleep fearlessly on their farms even today, but the English and you and I would

hesitate to sleep where they sleep. Strength lies in absence of fear, not in the quantity of flesh and muscle we may have on our bodies. Moreover, I must remind you who desire Home Rule that, after all, the Bhils, the Pindaris, and the Thugs are our own countrymen. To conquer them is your and my work. So long as we fear our own brethren, we are unfit to reach the goal.

9. THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): RAILWAYS

Reader: You have deprived me of the consolation I used to have regarding peace in India.

Editor: I have merely given you my opinion on the religious aspect, but when I give you my views as to the poverty of India, you will perhaps begin to dislike me because what you and I have hitherto considered beneficial for India no longer appears to me to be so.

Reader: What may that be?

Editor: Railways, lawyers and doctors have impoverished the country so much so that, if we do not wake up in time, we shall be ruined.

Reader: I do now, indeed, fear that we are not likely to agree at all. You are attacking the very institutions which we have hitherto considered to be good.

Editor: It is necessary to exercise patience. The true inwardness of the evils of civilization you will understand with difficulty. Doctors assure us that a consumptive clings to life even when he is about to die. Consumption does not produce apparent hurt. It even produces a seductive color about a patient's face so as to induce the belief that all is well. Civilization is such a disease and we have to be very wary.

Reader: Very well, then. I shall bear you on the railways.

Editor: It must manifest to you that, but for the railways, the English could not have such a hold on India as they have. The railways, too, have spread the bubonic plague. Without them the masses could not move from place to place. They are the carriers of plague germs. Formerly, we had natural segregation. Railways have also increased the frequency of famines because, owing to facility of means of locomotion people sell out their grain and it is sent to the dearest markets. People become careless and so the pressure of famine increases. Railways accentuate the evil nature of man. Bad men fulfill their evil designs with greater rapidity. The holy places of India have become unholy. Formerly, people went to these places with very great difficulty. Generally, therefore, only the real

real devotees visited such places. Nowadays rogues visit them in order to practise their roguery.

Reader: You have given one-sided account. Good men can visit these places as well as bad men. Why do they not take the fullest advantage of the railways?

Editor: Good travels at a snail's pace. It can, therefore, have little to do with the railways. Those who want to do good are not selfish, they are not in a hurry, they know that to impregnate people with good requires a long time. But evil has wings. To build a house takes time. Its destruction takes none. So the railways can become a distributing agency for the evil one only. It may be a debatable matter whether railways spread famines, but it is beyond dispute that they propagate evil.

Reader: Be that as it may, all the disadvantages of railways are more than counterbalanced by the fact that it is due to them that we see in India the new spirit of nationalism.

Editor: I hold this to be a mistake. The English have taught us that we were not one nation before and that it will require centuries before we become one nation. This is without foundation. We were one nation before they came to India. One thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same. It was because, we were one nation that they were able to establish one kingdom. Subsequently they divided us.

Reader: This requires an explanation.

Editor: I do not wish to suggest that because we were one nation we had no differences, but it is submitted that our leading men traveled throughout India either on foot or in bullock-carts. They learned one another's languages and there was no aloofness between them. What do you think could have been the intention of those farseeing ancestors of ours who established Setubandha (Rameshwar) in the South, Jagannath in the East and Hardwar in the North as places of pilgrimage? You Will admit they were no fools. They knew that worship of God could have been performed just as well at home. They taught us that those whose hearts were aglow with righteousness had the Ganges in their own homes. But they saw that India was one undivided land so made by nature. They, therefore, argued that it must be one nation. Arguing thus, they established holy places in various parts of India, and fired the people with an idea of nationality in a manner unknown in other parts of the world. And we Indians are one as no two Englishmen are. Only you and I and others who consider ourselves civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations. It was after the advent of railways that we began to believe in distinctions, and you are at liberty now to say that it is through the

railways that we are beginning to abolish those distinctions. An opium-cater may argue the advantage of opium eating from the fact that he began to understand the evil of the opium habit after having eaten it. I would ask you to consider well what I had said on the railways.

Reader: I will gladly do so, but one question occurs to me even now. You have described to me the India of the pre- Mohammedan period, but now we have Mohammedans, Parsis and Christians. How can they be one nation? Hindus and Mohammedans are old enemies. Our very proverbs prove it. Mohammedans turn to the West for worship, whilst Hindus turn to the East. The former look down on the Hindus as idolaters. The Hindus worship the cow, the Mohammedans kill her. The Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing, the Mohammedans do not. We thus meet with differences at every step. How can India be one nation?

10. THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): THE HINDUS AND THE MOHAMMEDANS

Editor: Your last question is a serious one and yet, on careful consideration, it will be found to be easy of solution. The question arises because of the presence of the railways, of the lawyers and of the doctors. We shall presently examine the last two. We have already considered the railways. I should, however, like to add that man is so made by nature as to require him to restrict his movements as far as his hands and feet will take him. If we did not rush about from place to place by means of railways and such other maddening conveniences, much of the confusion that arises would be obviated. Our difficulties are of our own creation. God set a limit to a man's locomotive ambition in the construction of his body. Man immediately proceeded to discover means of overriding the limit. God gifted man with intellect that he might know his Maker. Man abused it so that he might forget his Maker. I am so constructed that I can only serve my immediate neighbours, but in my conceit I pretend to have discovered that I must with my body serve every individual in the Universe. In thus attempting the impossible, man comes in contact with different natures, different religions, and is utterly confounded. According to this reasoning, it must be apparent to you that railways are a most dangerous institution. Owing to them, man has gone further away from his Maker.

Reader: But I am impatient to bear your answer to my question. Has the introduction of Mohammedanism not unmade the nation?

Editor: India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not

necessarily destroy the nation, they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation, India has ever been such a country. In reality there are as many religions as there are individuals; but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in dreamland. The Hindus, the Mohammedans, the Parsis and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow countrymen, and they will have to live in unity, if only for their own interest. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India.

Reader: But what about the inborn enmity between Hindus and Mohammedans?

Editor: That phrase has been invented by our mutual enemy. When the Hindus and Mohammedans fought against one another, they certainly spoke in that strain. They have long since ceased to fight. How, then, can there be any inborn enmity? Pray remember this too, that we did not cease to fight only after British occupation. The Hindus flourished under Moslem sovereigns and Moslems under the Hindu. Each party recognized that mutual fighting was suicidal, and that neither party would abandon its religion by force of arms. Both parties, therefore, decided to live in peace. With the English advent quarrels recommenced.

The proverbs you have quoted were coined when both were fighting; to quote them now is obviously harmful. Should we not remember that many Hindus and Mohammedans own the same ancestors and the same blood runs through their veins? Do people become enemies because they change their religion? Is the God of the Mohammedan different from the God of the Hindu? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the same goal? Wherein is the cause of quarreling?

Moreover, there are deadly proverbs as between the followers of Siva and those of Vishnu, yet nobody suggests that these two do not belong to the same nation. It is said that the Vedic religion is different from Jainism, but the followers of the respective faiths are not different nations. The fact is that we have become enslaved and, therefore, quarrel and like to have our quarrels decided by a third party. There are Hindu iconoclasts as there are Mohammedan. The more we advance in true knowledge, the better we shall understand that we need not be at war with those whose religion we may not follow.

Reader: Now I would like to know your views about cow protection.

Editor: I myself respect the cow, that is, I look upon her with affectionate reverence. The cow is the protector of India because, being an agricultural country, she is dependent on the cow. The cow is a most useful animal in hundreds of ways. Our Mohammedan brethren will admit this.

But, just as I respect the cow, so do I respect my fellow men. A man is just as useful as a cow no matter whether he be a Mohammedan or a Hindu. Am I, then, to fight with or kill a Mohammedan in order to save a cow? In doing so, I would become an enemy of the Mohammedan as well as of the cow. Therefore, the only method I know of protecting the cow is that I should approach my Mohammedan brother and urge him for the sake of the country to join me in protecting her. If he would not listen to me I should let the cow go for the simple reason that the matter is beyond my ability. If I were overfull of pity for the cow, I should sacrifice my life to save her but not take my brother's. This, I hold, is the law of our religion.

When men become obstinate, it is a fag. If I pull one way, my Moslem brother will pull another. If I put on a superior air, he will return the compliment. If I bow to him gently, he will do it much more so; and if he does not, I shall not be considered to have done wrong in having bowed. When the Hindus became insistent, the killing of cows increased. In my opinion, cow protection societies may be considered cow killing societies. It is a disgrace to us that we should need such societies. When we forgot how to protect cows, I suppose we needed such societies.

What am I to do when a blood brother is on the point of killing a cow? Am I to kill him, or to fall down at his feet and implore him? If you admit that I should adopt the latter course, I must do the same to my Moslem brother.

Who protects the cow from destruction by Hindus when they cruelly ill treat her? Whoever reasons with the Hindus when they mercilessly belabor the progeny of the cow with their sticks? But this has not prevented us from remaining one nation.

Lastly, if it is be true that the Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing and the Mohammedans do not, what, pray, is the duty of the former? It is not written that a follower of the religion of Ahimsa (non-killing) may kill a fellow-man. For him the way is straight. In order to save one being, he may not kill another. He can only plead, therein lies his sole duty.

But does every Hindu believe in Ahimsa? Going to the root of the matter, not one man really practises such a religion because we do destroy life. We are said to follow that religion because, we want to obtain freedom from liability to kill any kind of life. Generally speaking, we may observe that many Hindus partake of meat and are not, therefore, followers of Ahimsa. It is, therefore, preposterous to suggest that the two cannot live together amicably because the Hindus believe in Ahimsa Mohammedans do not.

These thoughts are put into our minds by selfish and false religious teachers. The English put the finishing touch. They have habit of writing history; they pretend to study the manners and customs of all peoples. God has given us a limited mental capacity, but they usurp the function of the Godhead and indulge in novel experiments. They write about their own researches in most laudatory terms and hypnotize us into believing them. We in our ignorance then fall at their feet.

Those who do not wish to misunderstand things may read up the Qur'an, and they will find therein hundreds of passages acceptable to the Hindus, and the Bhagavad Gita contains passages to which not a Mohammedan can take exception. Am I to dislike a Mohammedan because there are passages in the Qur'an I do not understand or like? It takes two to make a quarrel. If I do not wait to quarrel with a Mohammedan, the latter will be powerless to foist a quarrel on me; and, similarly, I should be powerless if a Mohammedan refuses his assistance to quarrel with me. An arm striking the air will become disjointed. If everyone will try to understand the core of his own religion and adhere to it, and will not allow false teachers to dictate to him, there will be no room left for quarrelling.

Reader: But will the English ever allow the two bodies to join hands?

Editor: This question arises out of your timidity. It betrays our shallowness. If two brothers want to live in peace, is it possible for a third party to separate them? If they were to listen to evil counsels we would consider them to be foolish. Similarly, we Hindus and Mohammedans would have to blame our folly rather than the English, if we allowed them to put us asunder. A clay pot would break through impact, if not with one stone, then with another. The way to save the pot is not to keep it away from the danger point but to bake it so that no stone would break it. We have then to make our hearts of perfectly baked clay. Then we shall be steeled against all danger. This can be easily done by the Hindus. They are superior in numbers; they pretend that they are more educated, they are, therefore, better able to shield themselves from attack

on their amicable relations with the Mohammedans.

There is mutual distrust between the two communities. The Mohammedans, therefore, ask for certain concessions from Lord Morley. Why should the Hindus oppose this? If the Hindus desisted, the English would notice it, the Mohammedans would gradually begin to trust the Hindus, and brotherliness would be the outcome. We should be ashamed to take our quarrels to the English. Everyone can find out for himself that the Hindus can lose nothing by desisting. That man who has inspired confidence in another has never lost anything in this world.

I do not suggest that the Hindus and the Mohammedans will never fight. Two brothers living together often do so. We shall sometimes have our heads broken. Such a thing ought not to be necessary, but all men are not equitable. When people are in a rage, they do many foolish things. These we have to put up with. But when we do quarrel, we certainly do not want to engage counsel and resort to English or any law courts. Two men fight; both have their heads broken, or one only. How shall a third party distribute justice amongst them? Those who fight may expect to be injured.

11. THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): LAWYERS

Reader: You tell me that when two men quarrel they should not go to a law-court. This is astonishing.

Editor: Whether you call it astonishing or not, it is the truth. And your question introduces us to the lawyers and the doctors. My firm opinion is that the lawyers have enslaved India, have accentuated Hindu-Mohammedan dissensions and have confirmed English authority.

Reader: It is easy enough to bring these charges, but it will be difficult for you to prove them. But for the lawyers, who would have shown us the road to independence? Who would have protected the poor? Who would have secured justice? For instance, the late Man Mohan Ghose defended many a poor man free of charge. The Congress, which you have praised so much is dependent for its existence and activity upon the work of the lawyers. To denounce such an estimable class of men is to spell injustice, and you are abusing the liberty of the press by decrying lawyers.

Editor: At one time I used to think exactly like you. I have no desire to convince you that they have never done a single good thing. I honor Mr. Ghose's memory. It is quite true that he helped the poor. That the Congress owes the lawyers something is believable. Lawyers are also

men, and there is something good in every man. Whenever instances of lawyers having done good can be brought forward, it will be found that the good is due to them as men rather than as lawyers. All I am concerned with is to show you that the profession teaches immorality; it is exposed to temptation from which few are saved.

The Hindus and the Mohammedans have quarreled. An ordinary man will ask them to forget all about it, he will tell them that both must be more or less at fault, and will advise them no longer to quarrel. But they go to lawyers. The latter's duty is to side with their clients and to find out ways and arguments in favor of the clients to which they (the clients) are often strangers. If they do not do so they will be considered to have degraded their profession. The lawyers therefore, will, as a rule, advance quarrels instead of repressing them. Moreover, men take up that profession, not in order to help others out of their miseries, but to enrich themselves. It is one of the avenues of becoming wealthy and their interest exists in multiplying disputes. It is within my knowledge that they are glad when men have disputes. Petty pleaders actually manufacture them. Their touts, like so many leeches, suck the blood of the poor people. Lawyers are men who have little to do. Lazy people, in order to indulge in luxuries, take up such professions. This is a true statement. Any other argument is a mere pretension. It is the lawyers who have discovered that theirs is an honorable profession. They frame laws as they frame their own praises. They decide what fees they will charge and they put on so much side that poor people almost consider them to be heaven born.

Why do they want more fees than common laborers? Why are their requirements greater? In what way are they more profitable to the country than the laborers? Are those who do good entitled to greater payment? And, if they have done anything for the country for the sake of money, how shall it be counted as good?

Those who know anything of the Hindu-Mohammedan quarrels know that they have been often due to the intervention of lawyers. Some families have been ruined through them; they have made brothers enemies. Principalities, having come under the lawyers' power have become loaded with debt. Many have been robbed of their all. Such instances can be multiplied.

But the greatest injury they have done to the country is that they have tightened the English grip. Do you think that it would be possible for the English to carry on their Government without law courts? It is wrong to consider that courts are established for the benefit of the people. Those who want to perpetuate their power do so through the courts. If

people were to settle their own quarrels, a third party would not be able to exercise any authority over them. Truly, men were less unmanly when they settled their disputes either by fighting or by asking their relatives to decide for them. They became more unmanly and cowardly when they resorted to the courts of law. It was certainly a sign of savagery when they settled their disputes by fighting. Is it any the less so, if I ask a third party to decide between you and me? Surely, the decision of a third party is not always right. The parties alone know who is right. We, in our simplicity and ignorance, imagine that a stranger, by taking our money, gives us justice.

The chief thing, however, to be remembered is that without lawyers courts could not have been established or conducted and without the latter the English could not rule. Supposing that there were only English judges, English pleaders and English police, they could only rule over the English. The English could not do without Indian judges and Indian pleaders. How the pleaders were made in the first instance and how they were favored, you should understand well. Then you will have the same abhorrence for the profession, that I have. If pleaders were to abandon and consider it just as degrading as prostitution, English rule would break up in a day. They have been instrumental in having the charge laid against us that we love quarrels and courts as fish love water. What I have said with reference to the pleaders necessarily applies to the judges, they are first cousins; and the one gives strength to the other.

12. THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): DOCTORS

Reader: I now understand the lawyers, the good they may have done is accidental. I feel that Profession is certainly hateful. You, however, drag in the doctors also, how is that?

Editor: The views I submit to you are those I have adopted. They are not original. Western writers have used stronger terms regarding both lawyers and doctors. One writer has linked the whole modern system to the Upas tree. Its branches are represented by parasitical professions, including those, of law and medicine, and over the trunk has been raised the axe of true religion. Immorality is the root of the tree. So you will see that the views do not come right out of my mind but represent the combined experiences of many. I was at one time a great lover of the medical profession. It was my intention to become a doctor for the sake of the country. I no longer hold that opinion. I now understand why the medicine

men (the vairs) among us have not occupied a very honorable status.

The English have certainly effectively used the medical profession for holding us. English physicians are known to have used their profession with several Asiatic potentates for political gain.

Doctors have almost unhinged us. Sometimes I think that quacks are better than highly qualified doctors. Let us consider the business of a doctor is to take care of the body, or, properly speaking, not even that. Their business is really to rid the body of diseases that may afflict it. How do these diseases arise? Surely by our negligence or indulgence I overeat, I have indigestion, I go to a doctor, he gives me medicine, I am cured. I overeat again, I take his pills again. Had I not taken the pills in the first instance, I would have suffered the punishment deserved by me and I would not have overeaten again. The doctor intervened and helped me to indulge myself. My body thereby certainly felt more at ease, but my mind became weakened. A continuance of a course of medicine must, therefore, result in loss of control over the mind.

I have indulged in vice, I contract a disease, a doctor cures me, the odds are that I shall repeat the vice. Had the doctor not intervened, nature would have done its work, and I would have acquired mastery over myself, would have been freed from vice and would have become happy.

Hospitals are institutions for propagating sin. Men take less care of their bodies and immorality increases. European doctors are the worst of all. For the sake of a mistaken care of the human body, they kill annually thousands of animals. They practice vivisection. No religion sanctions this. All say that it is not necessary to take so many lives for the sake of our bodies.

These doctors violate our religious instinct. Most of their medical preparations contain either animal fat or spirituous liquors, both of these are tabooed by Hindus and Mohammedans. We may pretend to be civilized, call religious prohibitions a superstition and wantonly indulge in what we like. The fact remains that the doctors induce us to indulge, and the result is that we have become deprived of self-control and have become effeminate. In these circumstances, we are unfit to serve the country. To study European medicine is to deepen our slavery.

It is worth considering why we take up the profession of medicine. It is certainly not taken up for the purpose of serving humanity. We become doctors so that we may obtain honors and riches. I have endeavored to show that there is no real service of humanity in the profession, and that it is injurious to mankind. Doctors make a show of their knowledge, and charge exorbitant fees. Their preparations, which are intrinsically worth

a few pence, cost shillings. The populace, in its credulity and in the hope of ridding itself of some disease, allows itself to be cheated. Are not quacks then whom we know, better than the doctors who put on an air of humaneness?

13. WHAT IS TRUE CIVILIZATION?

Reader: You have denounced railways, lawyers and doctors. I Can see that you will discard all machinery. What then, is civilization?

Editor: The answer to that question is not difficult. I believe, that the civilization India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world. Nothing can equal the seeds sown by our ancestors. Rome went, Greece shared the same fate; the might of the Pharaohs was broken; Japan has become Westernized; of China nothing can be said; but India is still, somehow or, other, sound at the foundation. The people of Europe learn their lessons from the writings of the men of Greece or Rome, which exist no longer in their, former glory. In trying to learn from them, the Europeans imagine that they will avoid the mistakes of Greece and Rome. Such is their pitiable condition. In the midst of all this, India remains immovable and that is her glory. It is a charge against India that her people are so uncivilized, ignorant and stolid that it is not possible to induce them to adopt any changes. It is a charge really against our merit. What we have tested and found true on the anvil of experience, we dare not change. Many thrust their advice upon India, and she remains steady. This is her beauty: it is the sheet-anchor of our hope.

Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves. The Gujarati equivalent for civilization means "good conduct".

If this definition be correct, then India, as so many writers have shown, has nothing to learn from anybody else, and this is as it should be. We notice that the mind is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passions the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich, or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy, the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor. Observing all this, our ancestors dissuaded us from luxuries and pleasures. We have managed with the same kind of

plough as existed thousands of years ago. We have retained the same kind of cottages that we had in former times and our indigenous education remains the same as before. We have had no system of life corroding competition. Each followed his own occupation or trade and charged a regulation wage. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fiber. They therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in a proper use of our hands and feet. They further reasoned that large cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitution and vice flourishing in them and that poor men would be robbed by rich men. They were, therefore, satisfied with small villages. They saw that kings and their swords were inferior to the sword of ethics, and they, therefore, held the sovereigns of the earth to be inferior to the Rishis and the Fakirs. A nation with a constitution like this is fitter to teach others than to learn from others. This nation had courts, lawyers and doctors, but they were all within bounds. Everybody knew that these professions were not particularly superior. Moreover, these vakils and vairs did not rob people, they were considered people's dependants, not their masters. Justice was tolerably fair. The ordinary rule was to avoid courts. There were no touts to lure people into them. This evil, too was noticeable only in and around capitals. The common people lived independently and followed their agricultural occupation. They enjoyed true Home Rule.

And where this cursed modern civilization has not reached, India remains as it was before. The inhabitants of that part of India will very properly laugh at your newfangled notions. The English do not rule over them, nor will you ever rule over them. Those in whose name we speak we do not know, nor do they know us. I would certainly advise you and those like you who love the motherland to into the interior that has yet been not polluted by the railways and to live there for six months; you might then be patriotic and speak of Home Rule.

Now you see what I consider to be real civilization. Those who want to change conditions such as I have described are enemies of the country and are sinners.

Reader: It would be all right if India were, exactly as you have described it, but it is also India where there are hundreds of child widows, where two year old babies are married, where twelve year old girls are mothers and house wives, where women practice polyandry, where the

practice of Niyoga obtains, where, in the name of religion, girls dedicate themselves to prostitution, and in the name of religion goats and sheep are killed. Do you consider these also as symbols of the civilization that you have described?

Editor: You make a mistake. The defects that you have shown are defects. Nobody mistakes them for ancient civilization. They remain in spite of it. Attempts have always been made and will be made to remove them. We may utilize the new spirit that is born in us for purging ourselves of these evils. But what I have described to you as emblems of modern civilization are accepted as such by its votaries. The Indian civilization, as described by me, has been so described by its votaries. In no part of the world, and under no civilization, have all men attained perfection. The tendency of the Indian civilization is to elevate the moral being, that of the Western civilization is to propagate immorality. The latter is godless, the former is based on a belief in God. So understanding and so believing, it behooves every lover of India to cling to the old Indian civilization even as a child clings to its mother's breast.

14. HOW CAN INDIA BECOME FREE?

Reader: I appreciate your views about civilization. I will have to think over them. I cannot take them in all at once. What, then, holding the views you do, would you suggest for freeing India?

Editor: I do not expect my views to be accepted all of a sudden. My duty is to place them before readers like yourself. Time can be trusted to do the rest. We have already examined the conditions for freeing India, but we have done so indirectly; we will now do so directly. It is a world-known maxim that the removal of the cause of a disease results in the removal of the disease itself. Similarly if the cause of India's slavery be removed, India can become free.

Reader: If Indian civilization is, as you say, the best how do you account for India's slavery?

Editor: This civilization is unquestionably the best, but it is to be observed that all civilizations have been on their trial. That civilization which is permanent outlives it. Because the sons of India were found wanting, its civilization has been placed in jeopardy. But its strength is to be seen in its ability to survive the shock. Moreover, the whole of India is not touched. Those alone who have been affected by Western civilization have become enslaved. We measure the universe by our own miserable foot-rule. When we are slaves, we think that the whole universe is enslaved.

Because we are in an abject condition, we think that the whole of India is in that condition. As a matter of fact, it is not so, yet it is as well to impute our slavery to the whole of India. But if we bear in mind the above fact, we can see that if we become free, India is free. And in this thought you have a definition of Swaraj. It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands. Do not consider this Swaraj to be like a dream. There is no idea of sitting still. The Swaraj that I wish to picture is such that, after we have once realized it, we shall endeavor to the end of our life-time to persuade others to do likewise. But such Swaraj has to be experienced, by each one for himself. One drowning man will never save another. Slaves ourselves, it would be a mere pretension to think of freeing others. Now you will have seen that it is not necessary for us to have as our goal the expulsion of the English. If the English become Indianised, we can accommodate them. If they wish to remain in India along with their civilization, there is no room for them. It lies with us to bring about such a state of things.

Reader: It is impossible that Englishmen should ever become Indianised.

Editor: To say that is equivalent to saying that the English have no humanity in them. And it is really beside the point whether they become so or not. If we keep our own house in order, only those who are fit to live in it will remain. Others will leave of their own accord. Such things occur within the experience of all of us.

Reader: But it has not occurred in history.

Editor: To believe that what has not occurred in history will not occur at all is to argue disbelief in the dignity of man. At any rate, it behooves us to try what appeals to our reason. All countries are not similarly conditioned. The condition of India is unique. Its strength is immeasurable. We need not, therefore, refer to the history of other countries. I have drawn attention to the fact, that, when other civilizations have succumbed, the Indian has survived many a shock.

Reader: I cannot follow this. There seems little doubt that we shall have to expel the English by force of arms. So long as they are in the country we cannot rest. One of our poets says that slaves cannot even dream of happiness. We are day by day becoming weakened owing to the presence of the English. Our greatness is gone, our people look like terrified men. The English are in the country like a blight which we must remove by every means.

Editor: In your excitement, you have forgotten all we have been

considering. We brought the English, and we keep them. Why, do you forget that our adoption of their civilization makes their presence in India at all possible? Your hatred against them ought to be transferred to their civilization. But let us assume that we have to drive away the English by fighting, how is that to be done?

Reader: In the same way as Italy did it. What was possible for Mazzini and Garibaldi is possible for us. You cannot deny that they were very great men.

15. ITALY AND INDIA

Editor: It is well that you have instanced Italy. Mazzini was a great and good man; Garibaldi was a great warrior. Both are adorable; from their lives we can learn much. But the condition of Italy was different from that of India. In the first instance, the difference between Mazzini and Garibaldi is worth noting. Mazzini's ambition was not and has not yet been realized regarding Italy. Mazzini has shown in his writings on the duty of man that every man must learn how to rule himself. This has not happened in Italy. Garibaldi did not hold this view of Mazzini's. Garibaldi gave and every Italian took arms. Italy and Austria had the same civilization; they were cousins in this respect. It was a matter of tit for tat. Garibaldi simply wanted Italy to be free from the Austrian yoke. The machinations of Minister Cavour disgrace that portion of the history of Italy. And what has been the result? If you believe that because Italians rule Italy the Italian nation is happy, you are grouping in darkness. Mazzini has shown conclusively that Italy did not become free. Victor Emanuel gave one meaning to the expression; Mazzini gave another. According to Emanuel Cavour and even Garibaldi, Italy meant the King of Italy and his henchmen. According to Mazzini, it meant the whole of the Italian people, that is, its agriculturists. Emanuel was only its servant. The Italy of Mazzini still remains in a state of slavery. At the time of the so called national war, it was a game of chess between two rival kings with the people of Italy as pawns. The working classes in that land are still unhappy. They, therefore, indulge in assassination, rise in revolt, and rebellion or their part is always expected. What substantial gain did Italy obtain after the withdrawal of the Austrian troops? The gain was only nominal. The reforms for the sake of which the war was supposed to have been undertaken have not yet been granted. The condition of the people in general still remains the same. I am sure you do not wish to reproduce such a condition in India. I believe that you want the millions of India to

be happy, not that you want the reins of Government in your hands. If that be so, we have to consider only one thing: how can the millions obtain self-rule? You will admit that people under several Indian princes are being ground down. The latter mercilessly crush them. Their tyranny is greater than that of the English, and if you want such tyranny in India, then we shall never agree. My patriotism does not teach me that I am to allow people to be crushed under the heel of Indian princes if only the English retire. If I have the power, I should resist the tyranny of Indian princes just as much as that of the English. By patriotism I mean the welfare of the whole people, and if I could secure it at the hands of the English, I should bow down my head to them. If any Englishman dedicated his life to securing the freedom of India, resisting tyranny and serving the land, I should welcome that Englishman as an Indian.

Again, India can fight like Italy only when she has arms. You have not considered this problem at all. The English are splendidly armed, that does not frighten me, but it is clear that, to pit ourselves against them in arms, thousands of Indians must be armed. If such a thing be possible, how many years will it take? Moreover, to arm India on a large scale is to Europeanize it. Then her condition will be just as pitiable as that of Europe. This means, in short, that India must accept European civilization, and if that is what we want, the best thing is that we have among us those who are so well trained in that civilization. We will then fight for a few rights, will get what we can and so pass our days. But the fact is that the Indian nation will not adopt arms, and it is well that it does not.

Reader: You are over-stating the facts. All need not be armed. At first, we shall assassinate a few Englishmen and strike terror; then, a few men who will have been armed will fight openly. We may have to lose a quarter of a million men, more or less, but we shall regain our land. We shall undertake guerrilla warfare, and defeat the English.

Editor: That is to say, you want to make the holy land of India unholy. Do you not tremble to think of freeing India by assassinations? What we need to do is to sacrifice ourselves. It is a cowardly thought, that of killing others. Whom do you suppose to free by assassination? The millions of India do not desire it. Those who are intoxicated by the wretched modern civilization think these things. Those who will rise to power by murder will certainly not make the nation happy. Those who believe that India has gained by Dhingra's act and other similar acts in India make a serious mistake. Dhingra was a patriot, but his love was blind. He gave his body in a wrong way; its ultimate result can only be mischievous.

Reader: But you will admit that the English have been frightened

by these murders, and that Lord Morley's reforms are due to fear.

Editor: The English are both a timid and a brave nation. England is, I believe, easily influenced by the use of gun-powder. It is possible that Lord Morley has granted the reforms through fear, but what is granted under fear can be retained only so long as the fear lasts.

16. BRUTE FORCE

Reader: This is a new doctrine, that what is gained through fear is retained only while the fear lasts. Surely, what is given will not be withdrawn?

Editor: Not so. The Proclamation of 1857 was given at the end of a revolt, and for the purpose of preserving peace. When peace was secured and people became simple minded its full effect was toned down. If I cease stealing for fear of punishment, I would recommence the operation as soon as the fear is withdrawn from me. This is almost a universal experience. We have assumed that we can get men to do things by force and, therefore, we use force.

Reader: Will you not admit that you are arguing against yourself? You know that what the English obtained in their own country they obtained by using brute force. I know you have argued that what they have obtained is useless, but that does not affect my argument. They wanted useless things and they got them. My point is that their desire was fulfilled. What does it mean, what means they adopted? Why should we not obtain our goal, which is good, by any means whatsoever even by using violence? Shall I think of the means when I have to deal with a thief in the house? My duty is to drive him out anyhow. You seem to admit that we have received nothing, and that we shall receive nothing by petitioning. Why, then, may we not do so by using brute force? And, to retain what we may receive we shall keep up the fear by using the same force to the extent that it may be necessary. You will not find fault with a continuance of force to prevent a child from thrusting its foot into fire. Somehow or other we have to gain our end.

Editor: Your reasoning is Plausible. It has deluded many. I have used similar arguments before now. But I think I know better now, and I shall endeavour to undeceive you. Let us first take the argument that we are justified in gaining our end by using brute force because the English gained theirs by using similar means. It is perfectly true that they used brute force and that it is possible for us to do likewise, but by using similar means we can get only the same thing that they got. You will

admit that we do not want that. Your belief that there is no connection between the means and the end is a great mistake. Through that mistake even men who have been considered religious have committed grievous crimes. Your reasoning is the same as saying that we can get a rose through planting a noxious weed. If I want to cross the ocean, I can do so only by means of a vessel: if I were to use a cart for that purpose, both the cart and I would soon find the bottom. "As is the God, so is the votary", is a maxim worth considering. Its meaning has been distorted and men have gone astray. The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree: and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. I am not likely to obtain the result flowing from the worship of God by laying myself prostrate before Satan. If, therefore, anyone were to say: "I want to worship God; it does not matter that I do so by means of Satan," it would be set down as ignorant folly. We reap exactly as we sow. The English in 1833 obtained greater voting power by violence. Did they by using brute force better appreciate their duty? They wanted the right of voting, which they obtained by using physical force. But real rights are a result of performance of duty: these rights they have not obtained. We, therefore, have before us in England the force of everybody wanting and insisting on his rights, nobody thinking of his duty. And, where everybody wants rights, who shall give them to whom? I do not wish to imply that they do no duties. They don't perform the duties corresponding to those rights; and as they do not perform that particular duty, namely, acquire fitness, their rights have proved a burden to them. In other words, what they have obtained is an exact result of the means they adopted. They used the means corresponding to the end. If I want to deprive you of your watch, I shall certainly have to fight for it; if I want to buy your watch, I shall have to pay you for it; and if I want a gift, I shall have to plead for it, and, according to the means I employ, the watch is stolen property, my own property, or a donation. Thus we see three different results from three different means. Will you still say that means do not matter?

Now we shall take the example given by you of the thief to be driven out. I do not agree with you that the thief may be driven out by any means. If it is my father who has come to steal I shall use one kind of means. If it is an acquaintance I shall use another, and in the case of a perfect stranger I shall use a third. If it is a white man, you will perhaps say you will use means different from those you will adopt with an Indian thief. If it is a weakling, the means will be different from those to be adopted for dealing with an equal in physical strength, and if the thief is

armed from top to toe, I shall simply remain quiet. Thus we have a variety of means between the father and the armed man. Again, I fancy that I should pretend to be sleeping whether the thief was my father or that strong armed man. The reason for this is that my father would also be armed and I should succumb to the strength possessed by either and allow my things to be stolen. The strength of my father would make me weep with pity; the strength of the armed man would rouse in me anger and we should become enemies. Such is the curious situation. From these examples we may not be able to agree as to the means to be adopted in each case. I myself seem clearly to see what should be done in all these cases, but the remedy may frighten you. I, therefore, hesitate to place it before you. For the time being I will leave you to guess it, and if you cannot, it is clear you will have to adopt different means in each case. You will also have seen that any means will not avail to drive away the thief. You will have to adopt means to fit each case. Hence it follows that your duty is not to drive away the thief by any means you like.

Let us proceed a little further. That well-armed man has stolen your property; you have harbored the thought of his act, you are filled with anger; you argue that you want to punish that rogue, not for your own sake, but for the good of your neighbors; you have collected a number of armed men, you want to take his house by assault; he is duly informed of it, he runs away, he too is incensed. He collects his brother robbers, and sends you a defiant message that he will commit robbery in broad daylight. You are strong, you do not fear him, you are prepared to receive him. Meanwhile the robber pesters your neighbors. They complain before you. You reply that you are doing all for their sake, you do not mind that your own goods have been stolen. Your neighbors reply that the robber never pestered them before, and that he commenced his depredations only after you declared hostilities against him. You are between Sylla and Charybdis. You are full of pity for the poor men. What they say is true. What are you to do? You will be disgraced if you now leave the robber alone. You, therefore, tell the poor men: "Never mind. Come, my wealth is yours, I will give you arms, I will teach you how to use them; you should belabor the rogue; don't you leave him alone." And so the battle grows; the robbers increase in numbers; your neighbors have deliberately put themselves to inconvenience. Thus the result of wanting to take revenge upon the robber is that you have disturbed your own peace, you are in perpetual fear of being robbed and assaulted, your courage has given place to cowardice. If you will patiently examine the argument, you will see that I have not overdrawn the picture. This is one of the means. Now let us examine the

other. You set this armed robber down as an ignorant brother; you intend to reason with him at a suitable opportunity: you argue that he is, after all, a fellow-man; you do not know what prompted him to steal. You, therefore, decide that, when you can, you will destroy the man's motive for stealing. Whilst you are thus reasoning with yourself, the man comes again to steal. Instead of being angry with him you take pity on him. You think that this stealing habit must be a disease with him. Henceforth, you, therefore, keep your doors and windows open. You change your sleeping place, and you keep your things in a manner most accessible to him. The robber comes again and is confused as all this is new to him; nevertheless he takes away your things. But his mind is agitated. He inquires about you in the village, he comes to learn about your broad and loving heart, he, repents, he begs your pardon, returns you your things, and leaves off the stealing habit. He becomes your servant, and you find for him honorable employment. This is the second method. Thus, you see, different means have brought about totally different results. I do not wish to deduce from this that robbers will act in the above manner or that all will have the same pity and love like you. But I only wish to show that fair means alone can produce fair results, and that, at least in the majority of cases, if not indeed in all, the force of love and pity is infinitely greater than the force of arms. There is harm in the exercise of brute force, never in that of pity.

Now we will take the question of petitioning. It is a fact beyond dispute that a petition, without the backing of force is useless. However, the late Justice Ranade used to say that petitions served a useful purpose because they were a means of educating people. They give the latter an idea of their condition and warn the rulers. From this point of view, they are not altogether useless. A petition of an equal is a sign of courtesy, a petition from a slave is a symbol of his slavery. A petition backed by force is a petition from an equal and, when he transmits his demand in the form of a petition, it testifies to his nobility. Two kinds of force can back petitions. "We will hurt you if you do not give this", is one kind of force; it is the force of arms, whose evil results we have already examined. The second kind of force can thus be stated: "If you do not concede our demand, we shall be no longer your petitioners. You can govern us only so long as we remain the governed; we shall no longer have any dealings with you." The force implied in this may be described as love-force, soul-force, or, more popularly but less accurately, passive resistance. This force is indestructible. He who uses it perfectly understands his position. We have an ancient proverb which literally means: "One negative cures

thirty-six diseases.” The force of arms is powerless when matched against the force of love or the soul.

Now we shall take your last illustration, that of the child thrusting its foot into fire. It will not avail you. What do you really do to the child? Supposing that it can exert so much physical force that it renders you powerless and rushes into fire, then you cannot prevent it. There are only two remedies open to you either you must kill it in order to prevent it from perishing in the flames, or you must give your own life because you do not wish to see it perish before your very eyes. You will not kill it. If your heart is not quite full of pity. It is possible that you will not surrender yourself by preceding the child and going into the fire yourself. You, therefore, helplessly allow it to go into the flames. Thus, at any rate, you are not using physical force. I hope you will not consider that it is still physical force, though of a low order, when you would forcibly prevent the child from rushing towards the fire if you could. That force is of a different order and we have to understand what it is.

Remember that, in thus preventing the child, you are minding entirely its own interest, you are exercising authority for its sole benefit. Your example does not apply to the English. In using brute force against the English you consult entirely your own, that is the national interest. There is no question here either of pity or of love. If you say that the actions of the English, being evil, represent fire and that they proceed to their actions through ignorance, and that therefore they occupy the position of a child and that you want to protect such a child, then you will have to overtake every evil action of that kind by whomsoever committed and, as in the case of the evil child, you will have to sacrifice yourself. If you are capable of such immeasurable pity, I wish you well in its exercise.

17. PASSIVE RESISTANCE

Reader: Is there any historical evidence as to the success of what you have called soul-force or truth-force? No instance seems to have happened of any nation having risen through soul-force. I still think that the evil-doers will not cease doing evil without physical punishment.

Editor: The poet Tulsidas has said: “Of religion, pity or love is the root, as egotism of the body.” Therefore, we should not abandon pity so long as we are alive.” This appears to me to be a scientific truth. I believe in it as much as I believe in two and two being four. The force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth. We have evidence of its working at every step. The universe would disappear without the existence of that

force. But you ask for historical evidence. It is, therefore, necessary to know what history means. The Gujarati equivalent means: "It so happened". If that is the meaning of history, it is possible to give copious evidence. But, if it means the doings of the kings and emperors, there can be no evidence of soul-force or passive resistance in such history. You cannot expect silver ore in a tin mine. History, as we know it, is a record of the wars of the world, and so there is a proverb among Englishmen that a nation which has no history, that is, no wars, is a happy nation. How kings played, how they became enemies of one another, how they murdered one another, is found accurately recorded in history, and if this were all that had happened in the world, it would have been ended long ago. If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive today. Those people who have been warred against have disappeared as, for instance, the natives of Australia of whom hardly a man was left alive by the intruders. Mark please, that these natives did not use soul force in self-defense, and it does not require much foresight to know that the Australians will share the same fate as their victims. "Those that take the sword shall perish by the sword." With us the proverb is that professional swimmers will find a watery grave.

The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is not based on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars in the world, it still lives on.

Thousands, indeed tens of thousands, depend for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take note of this fact. History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of this force of love or of the soul. Two brothers quarrel; one of them repents and re-awakens the love that was lying dormant in him; and the two again began to live in peace; nobody takes note of this. But if the two brothers, through the intervention of solicitors or some other reason take up arms or go to law which is another form of brute force, their doings would be immediately noticed in the press, they would be the talk of their neighbors and would probably go down to history. And what is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason to believe that there is one law for families and another for nations. History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of nature. Soul-force, being natural is not

noted in history.

Reader: According to what you say, it is plain that instances of this kind of passive resistance are not to be found in history. It is necessary to understand this passive resistance more fully. It will be better, therefore, if you enlarge upon it.

Editor: Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering, it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force. For instance, the Government of the day has passed a law which is applicable to me. I do not like it. If by using violence I, force the Government to repeal the law, I am employing what may be termed body force. If I do not obey the law and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is, infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust only the person using, it suffers, he does not make others suffer for his mistakes. Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim that he is absolutely in the right or that particular thing is wrong because he thinks so, but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment. It is therefore meet that he should not do that which he knows to be wrong, and suffer the consequence whatever it may be. This is the key to the use of soul-force.

Reader: You would then disregard laws, this is rank disloyalty. We have always been considered a law abiding nation. You seem to be going even beyond the extremists. They say that we must obey the laws that have been passed but that, if the laws be bad, we must drive out the law givers even by force.

Editor: Whether I go beyond them or whether I do not is a matter of no consequence to either of us. We simply want to find out what is right and to act accordingly. The real meaning of the statement that we are a law-abiding nation is that we are passive resisters. When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of lawgivers but we suffer and do not submit to the laws. That we should obey laws whether good or bad is a newfangled notion. There was no such thing in former days. The people disregarded those laws they did not like and suffered the penalties for their breach. It is contrary to our manhood if we obey laws repugnant to our conscience. Such teaching is opposed to a religion and means slavery. If the Government were to ask us to go about without any clothing, should we do so? If I were a passive resister, I would say to them that I would

have nothing to do with their law. But we have so forgotten ourselves and become so compliant that we do not mind any degrading law.

A man who has realized his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else. Man made laws are not necessarily binding on him. Even the Government does not expect any such things from us. They do not say: "You must do such and such a thing," but they say: "if you do not do it, we will punish you." We are sunk so low that we fancy that it is our duty and our religion to do what the law lays down. If man will only realize that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule or home-rule.

It is a superstition and ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities. If among a band of robbers a knowledge of robbing is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.

To use brute force, to use gunpowder, is contrary to passive resistance, for it means that we want our opponent to do by force that which we desire but he does not. And if such a use of force is justifiable surely he is entitled to do likewise by us. And so we should never come to an agreement. We may simply fancy, like the blind horse moving in a circle round a mill, that we are making progress. Those who believe that they are not bound to obey laws which are repugnant to their conscience have only the remedy of passive resistance open to them. Any other must lead to disaster.

Reader: From what you say I deduce that passive resistance is a splendid weapon of the weak, but that when they are strong they may take up arms.

Editor: This is gross ignorance. Passive resistance, that is, soul-force, is matchless. It is superior to the force of arms. How, then, can it be considered only a weapon of the weak? Physical-force men are strangers to the courage that is requisite in a passive resister. Do you believe that a coward can ever disobey a law that he dislikes? Extremists are considered to be advocates of brute force. Why do they, then, talk about obeying laws? I do not blame them. They can say nothing else. When they succeed in driving out the English and they themselves become governors, they will want you and me to obey their laws. And that is a fitting thing for

their constitution. But a passive resister will say he will not obey a law that is against his conscience, even though he may be blown to pieces at the mouth of a cannon.

What do you think? Wherein is courage required-in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon, or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and be blown to pieces? Who is the true warrior be, who keeps death always as a bosom-friend, or he who controls the death of others? Believe me that a man devoid of courage and manhood can never be a passive resister.

This however, I will admit: that even a man weak in body is capable of offering this resistance. One man can offer it just as well as millions. Both men and women can indulge in it. It does not require the training of an army; it needs no jiu-jitsu. Control over the mind is alone necessary, and when that is attained, man is free like the king of the forest and his very glance withers the enemy.

Passive resistance is an all-sided sword, it can be used anyhow; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood it produces far reaching results. It never rusts and cannot be stolen. Competition between passive resisters does not exhaust. The sword of passive resistance does not require a scabbard. It is strange indeed that you should consider such a weapon to be a weapon merely of the weak.

Reader: You have said that passive resistance is a specialty of India. Have cannons never been used in India?

Editor: Evidently, in your opinion, India means its few princes. To me it means its teeming millions on whom depends the existence of its princes and our own.

Kings will always use their kingly weapons. To use force is bred in them. They want to command, but those who have to obey commands do not want guns: and these are in a majority throughout the world. They have to learn either body-force or soul-force. Where they learn the former, both the rulers and the ruled become like so many madmen, but where they learn soul-force, the commands of the rulers do not go beyond the point of their swords, for true men disregard unjust commands. Peasants have never been subdued by the sword, and never will be. They do not know use of sword and they are not frightened by the use of it by others. That nation is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow. Those who defy death are free from all fear. For those who are laboring under delusive charms of brute-force, this picture is not over-drawn. The fact is that, in India the nation at large has generally used passive resistance in

all departments of life. We cease to co-operate with our rulers when they displease us. This is passive resistance.

I remember an instance when, in a small principality, the villagers were offended by some command issued by the prince. The former immediately began vacating the village. The prince became nervous, apologized to his subjects and withdrew his command. Many such instances can be found in India. Real home rule is possible only where passive resistance is the guiding force of the people. Any other rule is foreign rule.

Reader: Then you will say that it is not at all necessary for us to train the body?

Editor: I will certainly not say any such thing. It is difficult to become a passive resister unless the body is trained. As a rule the mind, residing in a body, that has become weakened by pampering, is also weak, and where there is no strength of mind there can be no strength of soul. We shall have to improve our physique by getting rid of infant marriages and luxurious living. If I were to ask a man with a shattered body to face a cannon's mouth I should make a laughing-stock of myself.

Reader: From what you say then, it would appear that it is not a small thing to become a passive resister, and, if that is so, I should like you to explain how a man may become one.

Editor: To become a passive resister is easy enough but it is also equally difficult. I have known a lad of fourteen years become a passive resister: I have known also sick people do likewise; and I have also known physically strong and other-wise happy people unable to take up passive resistance. After a great deal of experience it seems to me that those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth, and cultivate fearlessness.

Chastity is one of the greatest disciplines without which the mind cannot attain requisite firmness. A man who is unchaste loses stamina, becomes emasculated and cowardly. He whose mind is given over to animal passions is not capable of any great effort. This can be proved by innumerable instances. What, then, is a married person to do is the question that arises naturally; and yet it need not. When a husband and wife gratify the passions, it is no less an animal indulgence on that account. Such an indulgence, except for perpetuating the race is strictly prohibited. But a passive resister has to avoid even that very limited indulgence because he can have no desire for progeny. A married man, therefore, can observe perfect chastity. This subject is not capable of being treated at greater

length. Several questions arise: How is one to carry one's wife with one? What are her rights and other similar questions. Yet those who wish to take part in a great work are bound to solve these puzzles.

Just as there is necessity for chastity, so is there for poverty, pecuniary ambition and passive resistance cannot well go together. Those who have money are not expected to throw it away. They must be prepared to lose every penny rather than give up passive resistance.

Passive resistance has been described in the course of our discussion as truth-force. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed and that at any cost. In this connection, academic questions occur only to those who wish to justify lying. Those who want to follow truth every time are not placed in such a quandary; and if they are, they are still saved from a small position.

Passive resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness. Those alone can follow the path of passive resistance who are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries or death.

These observances are not to be abandoned in the belief that they are difficult. Nature has implanted in the human breast ability to cope with any difficulty or suffering that may come to man unprovoked. These qualities are worth having, even for those who do not wish to serve the country. Let there be no mistake, as those who want to train themselves in the use of arms are also obliged to have these qualities more or less. Everybody does not become a warrior for the wish. A would-be warrior will have to observe chastity and to be satisfied with poverty as his lot. A warrior without fearlessness cannot be conceived of. It may be thought that he would not need to be exactly truthful, but that quality follows real fearlessness. When a man abandons truth he does so owing to fear in some shape or form. The above four attributes, then, need not frighten anyone. It may be as well here to note that a physical-force man has to have many other useless qualities which a passive resister never needs. And You will find that whatever extra effort a swordsman needs is due to lack of fearlessness. If he is an embodiment of the latter, the sword will drop from his hand that very moment. He does not need its support. One who is free from hatred requires no sword. A man with stick suddenly came face to face with a lion and instinctively raised his weapon in self-defense. The man saw that he had only prated about fearlessness when there was none in him. That moment he dropped the stick and found himself free from all fear.

18. EDUCATION

Reader: In the whole of our discussion, you have not demonstrated the necessity for education; we always complain of its absence among us. We notice a movement for compulsory education in our country. The Maharaja Gaekwar has introduced it in his territories. Every eye is directed towards them. We bless the Maharaja for it. Is all this effort then of no use?

Editor: If we consider our civilization to be the highest, I have regretfully to say that much of the effort you have described is of no use. The motive of the Maharaja and other great leaders who have been working in this direction is perfectly pure. They, therefore, undoubtedly deserve great praise. But we cannot conceal from ourselves the result that is likely to flow from their effort.

What is the meaning of education? It simply means a knowledge of letters. It is merely an instrument, and an instrument may be well used or abused. The same instrument that may be used to cure a patient may be used to take his life, and so may a knowledge of letters. We daily observe that many men abuse it and very few make good use of it; and if this is a correct statement, we have proved that more harm has been done by it than good.

The ordinary meaning of education is a knowledge of letters. To teach boys reading, writing and arithmetic is called primary education. A peasant earns his bread honestly. He has ordinary knowledge of the world. He knows fairly well how he should behave towards his parents, his wife, his children and his fellow villagers. He understands and observes the rules of morality. But he cannot write his own name. What do you propose to do by giving him a knowledge of letters? Will you add an inch to his happiness? Do you wish to make him discontented with his cottage or his lot? And even if you want to do that, he will not need such an education. Carried away by the flood of western thought we came to the conclusion, without weighing pros and cons, that we should give this kind of education to the people.

Now let us take higher education. I have learned Geography, Astronomy, Algebra, Geometry, etc. What of that? In what way have I benefited myself or those around me? Why have I learned these things? Professor Huxley has thus defined education: "That man I think has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of, whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order ...

whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the fundamental truths of nature whose passions are trained to conic to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience ... who has learnt to hate all vileness and to respect others as himself. Such a one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education, for he is in harmony with nature. He will make the best of her and she of him."

If this is true education, I must emphatically say that the sciences I have enumerated above I have never been able to use for controlling my senses. Therefore, whether you take elementary education or higher education, it is not required for the main thing. It does not make men of us. It does not enable us to do our duty.

Reader: If that is so. I shall have to ask you another question. What enables you to tell all, these things to me? If you had not received higher education, how would you have been able to explain to me the things that you have?

Editor: You have spoken well. But my answer is simple: I do not for one moment believe that my life would have been wasted, had I not received higher or lower education. Nor do I consider that I necessarily serve because I speak. But I do desire to serve and in endeavoring to fulfill that desire, I make use of the education I have received. And, if I am making good use of it, even then it is not for the millions, but I can use it only for such as you, and this supports my contention. Both you and I have come under the bane of what is mainly false education. I claim to have become free from its ill effect, and I am to giving you the benefit of my experience and in doing so, I am demonstrating the rottenness of this education.

Moreover, I have not run down a knowledge of letters in all circumstances. All I have now shown is that we must not make of it a fetish. It is not our Kamadhuk. In its place it can be of use and it has its place when we have brought our senses under subjection and put our ethics on a firm foundation. And then, if we feel inclined to receive that education, we may make good use of it. As an ornament it is likely to sit well on us. It now follows that it is not necessary to make this education compulsory. Our ancient school system is enough. Character-building has the first place in it and that is primary education. A building erected on that foundation will last.

Reader: Do I then understand that you do not consider English education necessary for obtaining Home Rule?

Editor:. My answer is yes and no. To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them. The foundation that Macaulay laid of education

has enslaved us. I do not suggest that he had any such intention, but that has been the result. Is it not a sad commentary that we should have to speak of Home Rule in a foreign tongue?

And it is worthy of note that the systems which the Europeans have discarded are the systems in vogue among us. Their learned men continually make changes. We ignorantly adhere to their cast-off systems. They are trying each division to improve its own status. Wales is a small portion of England. Great efforts are being made to revive a knowledge of Welsh among Welshmen. The English Chancellor, Mr. Lloyd George is taking a leading part in the movement to make Welsh children speak Welsh. And what is our condition? We write to each other in faulty English, and from this even our M.A.s are not free; our best thoughts are expressed in English, the proceedings of our Congress are conducted in English; our best newspapers are printed in English. If this state of things continues for a long time, posterity will, it is my firm opinion, condemn and curse us.

It is worth noting that, by receiving English education, we have enslaved the nation. Hypocrisy, tyranny, etc. have increased; English-knowing Indians have not hesitated to cheat and strike terror into the people. Now, if we are doing anything for the people at all, we are paying only a portion of the debt due to them.

Is it not a painful thing that, if I want to go to a court of justice, I must employ the English language as a medium; that when I become a barrister. I may not speak my mother tongue and that someone else should have to translate to me from my own language? Is not this absolutely absurd? Is it not a sign of slavery? Am I to blame the English for it or myself? It is we, the English-knowing men, that have enslaved India. The curse of the nation will rest not upon the English but upon us.

I have told you that my answer to your last question is both yes and no. I have explained to you why it is yes. I shall now, explain why it is no.

We are so much beset by the disease of civilization that we cannot altogether do without English-education. Those who have already received it may make good use of it wherever necessary. In our dealings with the English people, in our dealings with our own people, when we can only correspond with them through that language, and for the purpose of knowing how disgusted they (the English) have themselves become with their civilization, we may use or learn English, as the case may be. Those who have studied English will have to teach morality to their progeny through their mother tongue and to teach them another Indian language; but when they have grown up, they may learn English, the ultimate aim

being that we should not need it. The object of making money thereby should be eschewed. Even in learning English to such a limited extent we shall have to consider what we should learn through it and what we should not. It will be necessary to know what sciences we should learn. A little thought should show you that immediately we cease to care for English degrees, the rulers will prick up their ears.

Reader: Then what education shall we give?

Editor: This has been somewhat considered above, but we will consider it a little more. I think that we have to improve all our languages. What subjects we should learn through them need not be elaborated here. Those English books which are valuable, we should translate into the various Indian languages. We should abandon the pretension of learning many sciences. Religious, that is ethical, education will occupy the first place. Every cultured Indian will know in addition to his own provincial language, if a Hindu, Sanskrit; if a Mohammedan, Arabic; if a Parsee, Persian., and all, Hindus. Some Hindus should know Arabic and Persian; some Mohammedans and Parsees, Sanskrit. Several Northerners and Westerners should learn Tamil. A universal language for India should be Hindi, with the option of writing it in Persian or Nagari characters. In order that the Hindus and the Mohammedans may have closer relations, it is necessary to know both the characters. And, if we can do this, we can drive the English language out of the field in a short time. All this is necessary for us, slaves. Through our slavery the nation has been enslaved, and it will be free with our freedom.

Reader: The question of religious education is very difficult.

Editor: Yet we cannot do without it. India will never be godless. Rank atheism cannot flourish in this land. The task is indeed difficult. My head begins to turn as I think of religious education. Our religious teachers are hypocritical and selfish; they will have to be approached. The Mullahs, the Dasturs and the Brahmins hold the key in their hands but if they will not have the good sense, the energy that we have derived from English education will have to be devoted to religious education. This is not very difficult only the fringe of the ocean has been polluted, and it is those who are within the fringe who alone need cleansing. We who come under this category can even cleanse ourselves because my remarks do not apply to the millions. In order to restore India to its pristine condition, we have to return to it. In our own civilization there will naturally be progress, retrogression, reforms, and reactions but one effort is required, and that is to drive out Western civilization. All else will follow.

19. MACHINERY

Reader: When you speak of driving out Western civilization, I suppose you will say that we want no machinery.

Editor: By raising this Question, you have opened the wound I have received. When I read Mr.Dutt's Economic History of India, I wept; as I think of it again my heart sickens. It is machinery that has impoverished India. It is difficult to measure the harm that Manchester has done to us. It is due to Manchester that Indian handicraft has all but disappeared.

But I make a mistake. How can Manchester be blamed? We wore Manchester cloth and this is why Manchester wove it. I was delighted when I read about the bravery of Bengal. There were no cloth mills in that presidency. They were, therefore, able to restore the original hand-weaving occupation. It is true Bengal encourages the mill industry of Bombay. If Bengal had proclaimed a boycott of all machine made goods, it would have been much better.

Machinery has begun to desolate Europe. Ruination is now knocking at the English gates. Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization; it represents a great sin.

The workers in the mills of Bombay have become slaves. The condition of the women working in the mills is shocking. When there were no mills, these women were not starving. If the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land. It may be considered a heresy, but I am bound to say that it were better for us to send money to Manchester and to use flimsy Manchester cloth than to multiply mills in India. By using Manchester cloth we only waste our money; but by reproducing Manchester in India, we shall keep our money at the price of our blood, because our very moral being will be sapped, and I call in support of my statement the very mill-bands as witnesses. And those who have amassed wealth out of factories are not likely to be better than other rich men. It would be folly to assume that an Indian Rockefeller would be better than the American Rockefeller. Impoverished India can become free, but it will be hard for any India made rich through immorality to regain its freedom. I fear we shall have to admit that moneyed men support British rule; their interest is bound up with its stability. Money renders a man helpless. The other thing which is equally harmful is sexual vice. Both are poison. A snake-bite is a lesser poison than these two, because the former merely destroys the body but the latter destroy body, mind and soul. We need not, therefore, be pleased with the prospect of the growth of the mill industry.

Reader: Are the mills, then, to be closed down?

Editor: That is difficult. It is no easy task to do away with a thing that is established. We, therefore, say that the non beginning of a thing is supreme wisdom. We cannot condemn mill-owners; we can but pity them. It would be too much to expect them to give up their mills, but we may implore them not to increase them. If they would be good they would gradually contract their business. They can establish in thousands of households the ancient and sacred handlooms and they can buy out the cloth that may be thus woven. Whether the mill-owners do this or not, people can cease to use machine made goods.

Reader: You have so far spoken about machine made cloth, but there are innumerable machine made things. We have either to import them or to introduce machinery into our country.

Editor: Indeed, our goods even are made in Germany. What need, then, to speak of matches, pins and glassware? My answer can be only one. What did India do before these articles were introduced? Precisely the same should be done today. As long as we cannot make pins without machinery so long will we do without them. The tinsel splendor of glassware we will have nothing to do with, and we will make wicks, as of old, with home-grown cotton and use handmade earthen saucers for lamps. So doing, we shall save our eyes and money and support Swadeshi and so shall we attain Home Rule.

It is not to be conceived that all men will do all these things at one time or that some men will give up all machine made things at once. But, if the thought is sound, we shall always find out what we can give up and gradually cease to use it. What a few may do, others will copy; and the movement will grow like the cocoanut of the mathematical problem. What the leaders do, the populace will gladly do in turn. The matter is neither complicated nor difficult. You and I need not wait until we can carry others with us. Those will be the losers who will not do it, and those who will not do it, although they appreciate the truth, will deserve to be called cowards.

Reader: What, then, of the tram cars and electricity?

Editor: This question is now too late. It signifies nothing. If we are to do without the railways we shall have to do without the tram-cars. Machinery is like a snake-hole which may contain from one to a hundred snakes. Where there is machinery there are large cities; and where there are large cities, there are tram-cars and railways, and there only does one see electric light. English villages do not boast of any of these things. Honest physicians will tell you that where means of artificial locomotion have increased, the health of the people has suffered. I remember that

when in a European town there was a scarcity of money, the receipts of the tramway company of the lawyers, and of the doctors went down and people were less unhealthy. I cannot recall a single good point in connection with machinery. Books can be written to demonstrate its evils.

Reader: Is it a good point or a bad one that all you are saying will be printed through machinery?

Editor: This is one of those instances which demonstrate that sometimes poison is used to kill poison. This, then, will not be a good point regarding machinery. As it expires, the machinery, as it were, says to us: "Beware and avoid me. You will derive no benefits from me and the benefit that may accrue from printing will avail only those who are infected with the machinery craze."

Do not, therefore, forget the main thing. It is necessary to realize that machinery is bad. We shall then be able gradually to do away with it. Nature has not provided any way whereby we may reach a desired goal all of a sudden. If, instead of welcoming machinery as a boon, we should look upon it as an evil, it would ultimately go.

20. CONCLUSION

Reader: From your views I gather that You would form a third party. You are neither an extremist nor a moderate.

Editor: That is a mistake. I do not think of a third party at all. We do not all think alike. We cannot say that all the moderates hold identical views. And how can those who want only to serve have a party? I would serve both the moderates and the extremists. Where I differ from them, I would respectfully place my position before them and continue my service.

Reader: What, then, would you to both the parties.

Editor: I would say to the extremists: I know that you want Home Rule for India; it is not to be had for your asking. Everyone will have to take it for himself. What others get for me is not Home Rule but foreign rule, therefore, it would not be proper for you to say that you have obtained Home Rule if you have merely expelled the English. I have already described the true nature of Home Rule. This you would never obtain by force of arms. Brute-force is not natural to Indian soil. You will have, therefore, to rely wholly on soul-force. You must not consider that violence is necessary at any stage for reaching our goal."

I would say to the moderates: "Mere petitioning is derogatory, we thereby confess inferiority. To say that British rule is indispensable, is almost a denial of the Godhead. We cannot say that anybody or anything

is indispensable except God. Moreover, common sense should tell us that to state that, for the time being, the presence of the English in India is a necessity, is to make them conceited.

If the English vacated India, bag and baggage, it must not be supposed that she would be widowed, it is possible that those who are forced to observe peace under their pressure would fight after their withdrawal. There can be no advantage in suppressing an eruption; it must have its vent. If, therefore, before we can remain at peace, we must fight amongst ourselves, it is better that we do so. There is no occasion for a third party to protect the weak. It is this so called protection which has unnerved us. Such protection can only make the weak weaker. Unless we realize this, we cannot have Home Rule. I would paraphrase the thought of an English divine and say that anarchy under Home Rule were better than orderly foreign rule. Only the meaning that the learned divine attached to Home Rule is different from Indian Home Rule according to my conception. We have to learn, and to teach others, that we do not want the tyranny of either English rule or Indian rule."

If this idea were carried out, both the extremists and the moderates could join hands. There is no occasion to fear or distrust one another.

Reader: What, then, would you say to the English?

Editor: To them I would respectfully say: "I admit you are my rulers. It is not necessary to debate the question whether, you hold India by the sword or by my consent. I have no objection to your remaining in my country, but although you are the rulers, you will have to remain as servants of the people. It is not we who have to do as you wish, but it is you who have to do as we wish. You may keep the riches that you have drained away from this land, but you may not drain riches henceforth. Your function will be, if you so wish, to police India; you must abandon the idea of deriving any commercial benefit from us. We hold the civilization that you support to be the reverse of civilization. We consider our civilization to be far superior to yours. If you realize this truth, it will be to your advantage and, if you do not, according to your own proverb, you should only live in our country in the same manner as we do. You must not do anything that is contrary to our religions. It is your duty as rulers that for the sake of the Hindus you should eschew beef, and for the sake of Mohammedans you should avoid bacon and ham. We have hitherto said nothing because we have been cowed down, but you need not consider that you have not hurt our feelings by your conduct. We are not expressing our sentiments either through base selfishness or fear, but because it is our duty now to speak out boldly. We consider your schools and law

courts to be useless. We want our own ancient schools and courts to be restored. The common language of India is not English but Hindi. You should, therefore, learn it. We can hold communication with you only in our national language.

“We cannot tolerate the idea of your spending money on railways and the military. We see no occasion for either. You may fear Russia; we do not. When she comes, we shall look after her. If you are with us, we may then receive her jointly. We do not need any European cloth. We shall manage with articles produced and manufactured at home. You may not keep one eye on Manchester and the other on India. We can work together only if our interests are identical.

“This has not been said to you in arrogance, You have great military resources. Your naval power is matchless. If we wanted to fight with you on your own ground, we should be unable to do so, but if the above submissions are not acceptable to you, we cease to play the part of the ruled. You may, if you like, cut us to pieces. You may shatter us at the cannon’s mouth. If you act contrary to our will, we shall not help you; and without our help, we know that you cannot move one step forward.

“It is likely that you will laugh at all this in the intoxication of your power. We may not be able to disillusion you at once, but if there be any manliness in us, you will see shortly that your intoxication is suicidal and that your laugh at our expense is an aberration of intellect. We believe that at heart you belong to a religious nation. We are living in a land which is the source of religions. How we came together need not be considered, but we can make mutual good use of our relations.

“You, English, who have come to India are not good specimens of the English nation, nor can we, almost half- Anglicized Indians, be considered good specimens of the real Indian nation. If the English nation were to know all you have done, it would oppose many of your actions. The mass of the Indians have had few dealings with you. If you will abandon your so-called civilization and search into your own scriptures, you will find that our demands are just. Only on condition of our demands being fully satisfied may you remain in India; and if you remain under those conditions, we shall learn several things from you and you will learn many from us. So doing we shall benefit each other and the world. But that will happen only when the root of our relationship is sunk in a religious soil.”

Reader: What will you say to the nation?

Editor: Who is the nation?

Reader: For our purposes it is the nation that you and I have been thinking of, that is those of us who are affected by European civilization, and who are eager to have Home Rule.

Editor: To these I would say, "it is only those Indians who are imbued with real love who will be able to speak to the English in the above strain without being frightened, and only those can be said to be so imbued who conscientiously believe that Indian civilization is the best and that the European is a nine days' wonder. Such ephemeral civilizations have often come and gone and will continue to do so. Those only can be considered to be so imbued who, having experienced the force of the soul within themselves, will not cover before brute-force, and will not, on any account, desire to use brute-force. Those only can be considered to have been so imbued who are intensely dissatisfied with the present pitiable condition, having already drunk the cup of poison.

"If there be only one such Indian, he will speak as above to the English and the English will have to listen to him.

"These are not demands, but they show our mental state. We shall get nothing by asking; we shall have to take what we want, and we need the requisite strength for the effort and that strength will be available to him only who will act thus:

1. He will only on rare occasions make use of the English language;
2. If a lawyer, he will give up his profession, and take up a hand-loom,
3. If a lawyer, he will devote his knowledge to enlightening both his people and the English;
4. If a lawyer, he will not meddle with the quarrels between parties but will give up the courts, and from his experience induce the people to do likewise,
5. If a lawyer, he will refuse to be a judge, as he will give up his profession;
6. If a doctor, he will give up medicine, and understand that rather than mending bodies, he should mend souls,
7. If a doctor, he will understand that no matter to what religion he belongs, it is better that bodies remain diseased rather than that they are cured through the instrumentality of the diabolical vivisection that is practiced in European schools of medicine;
8. Although a doctor, he will take up a hand-loom, and if any patients come to him, will tell them the cause of their diseases, and will advise them to remove the cause rather than pamper them by giving useless drugs; he will understand that if by not taking drugs, perchance the patient

dies, the world will not come to grief and that he will have been really merciful to him.

9. Although a wealthy man, yet regardless of his wealth, he will speak out his mind and fear no one;

10. If a wealthy man, he will devote his money to establishing hand-looms, and encourage others to use hand made goods by wearing them himself;

11. Like every other Indian, he will know that this is a time for repentance, expiation and mourning;

12. Like every other Indian, he will know that to blame the English is useless, that they came because of us, and remain also for the same reason, and that they will either go or change their nature only when we reform ourselves;

13. Like others, he will understand that at a time of mourning, there can be no indulgence, and that, whilst we are in a fallen state, to be in goal or in banishment is much the best;

14. Like others, he will know that it is superstition to imagine it necessary that we should guard against being imprisoned in order that we may deal with the people;

15. Like others, he will know that action is much better than speech; that it is our duty to say exactly what we think and face the consequences and that it will be only then that we shall be able to impress anybody with our speech;

16. Like others, he will understand that we shall become free only through suffering;

17. Like others, he will understand that deportation for life to the Andamans is not enough expiation for the sin of encouraging European civilization;

18. Like others, he will know that no nation has risen without suffering, that, even in physical warfare, the true test is suffering and not the killing of others, much more so in the warfare of passive resistance;

19. Like others, he will know that it is an idle excuse to say that we shall do a thing when the others also do it: that we should do what we know to be right, and that others will do it when they see the way; that when I fancy a particular delicacy, I do not wait till others taste it: that to make a national effort and to suffer are in the nature of delicacies; and that to suffer under pressure is no suffering."

Reader: This is a large order. When will all carry it out?

Editor: You make a mistake. You and I have nothing to do with the others. Let each do his duty. If I do my duty, that is, serve myself, I shall

be able to serve others. Before I leave you, I will take the liberty of repeating:

1. Real home-rule is self-rule or self-control.
2. The way to it is passive resistance: that is soul-force or love-force.
3. In order to exert this force, Swadeshi in every sense is necessary.
4. What we want to do should be done, not because we object to the English or because we want to retaliate but because it is our duty to do so. Thus, supposing that the English remove the salt-tax, restore our money, give the highest posts to Indians, withdraw the English troops, we shall certainly not use their machine-made goods, nor use the English language, nor many of their industries. It is worth noting that these things are in their nature, harmful; hence we do not want them. I bear no enmity towards the English but I do towards their civilization.

In my opinion, we have used the term "Swaraj" without understanding its real significance. I have endeavored to explain it as I understand it, and my conscience testifies that my life, henceforth, is dedicated to its attainment.

GLOSSARY

ahimsa non-violence

anasakti non-attachment

artha Wealth/power, one of the four ends of human existence

atman the permanent self underlying human personality

atma Soul

bahadur courageous, honourable, an honorific title

Bania third highest caste in social hierarchy-Gandhi's caste

Bapu 'Father'

brahmacharya celibacy

brahmachari one who practices celibacy

Brahman the ultimate reality

brahmin highest caste in social hierarchy

charkha spinning-wheel

crore the sum of 10,000,000

dastur spiritual leader of Parsees

daya mercy, compassion

dehin the embodied self

dharma duty, natural moral law; religion as ethics and religion as sect

dhurna a traditional form of 'sit-down strike'

Jain or **Jaina** a follower of the Jain religion

kali-yug an 'era' of corruption

kama pleasure, one of the four ends of human existence

khadi home-spun cloth, made famous by Gandhi

khaddar another name for khadi

Khuda-Ishwar God

kudharo uncivilised way of life (opposite of **sudharo**)

Kshatriya second highest caste in the social hierarchy

Lakh the sum of 100, 000

mullah spiritual leader of Muslims

moksha salvation or the ultimate end of life

panchayat village council

pice the basic unit of the rupee in Gandhi's time

praja Gandhi's term for 'nation' in **Hind Swaraj**

rishi sage

the Raj the British regime in India

shastras traditional, often considered sacred, texts

satya truth **satyagraha** firmness in adhering to truth

satyagrahi one who practises satyagraha

shastri learned in Hindu scriptures

swadeshi pertaining to one's own country

swaraj self-rule, self-government

Upas tree *Antiaris toxicaria*, whose poisonous latex is used as arrow
poison: symbol of any life-destroying entity

vaid name for 'medical doctors' in pre-modern India

varna the ideal unit of a functionally divided Hindu society

varnashrama the four-fold hierarchical division of Hindu society

Vaishnava a member of the sect who worships Vishnu, a Hindu God

yagna sacrificial offering

Book—3

1. INTRODUCTION

After the great war it is difficult, to point out a single nation that is happy; but this has come out of the war, that there is not a single nation outside India, that is not either free or striving to be free.

It is said that we, too, are on the road to freedom, that it is better to be on the certain though slow course of gradual unfoldment of freedom than to take the troubled and dangerous path of revolution whether peaceful or violent, and that the new Reforms are a half-way house to freedom.

The new constitution granted to India keeps all the military forces, both in the direction and in the financial control, entirely outside the scope of responsibility to the people of India. What does this mean? It means that the revenues of India are spent away on what the nation does not want. But after the mid-Eastern complications and the fresh Asiatic additions to British Imperial spheres of action. This Indian military servitude is a clear danger to national interests.

The new constitution gives no scope for retrenchment and therefore no scope for measures of social reform except by fresh taxation, the heavy burden of which on the poor will outweigh all the advantages of any reforms. It maintains all the existing foreign services, and the cost of the administrative machinery high as it already is, is further increased.

The reformed constitution keeps all the fundamental liberties of person, property, press, and association completely under bureaucratic control. All those laws which give to the irresponsible officers of the Executive Government of India absolute powers to override the popular will, are still unrepealed. In spite of the tragic price paid in the Punjab for demonstrating the danger of unrestrained power in the hands of a foreign bureaucracy and the inhumanity of spirit by which tyranny in a panic will seek to save itself, we stand just where we were before, at the mercy of the Executive in respect of all our fundamental liberties.

Not only is Despotism intact in the Law, but unparalleled crimes and cruelties against the people have been encouraged and even after boastful

admissions and clearest proofs, left unpunished. The spirit of unrepentant cruelty has thus been allowed to permeate the whole administration.

THE MUSSALMAN AGONY

To understand our present condition it is not enough to realise the general political servitude. We should add to it the reality and the extent of the injury inflicted by Britain on Islam, and thereby on the Mussalmans of India. The articles of Islamic faith which it is necessary to understand in order to realise why Mussalman India, which was once so loyal is now so strongly moved to the contrary are easily set out and understood. Every religion should be interpreted by the professors of that religion. The sentiments and religious ideas of Muslims founded on the traditions of long generations cannot be altered now by logic or cosmopolitanism, as others understand it. Such an attempt is the more unreasonable when it is made not even as a bonafide and independent effort of proselytising logic or reason, but only to justify a treaty entered into for political and worldly purposes.

The Khalifa is the authority that is entrusted with the duty of defending Islam. He is the successor to Muhammad and the agent of God on earth. According to Islamic tradition he must possess sufficient temporal power effectively to protect Islam against non-Islamic powers and he should be one elected or accepted by the Mussalman world.

The Jazirat-ul-Arab is the area bounded by the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates. It is the sacred Home of Islam and the centre towards which Islam throughout the world turns in prayer. According to the religious injunctions of the Mussalmans, this entire area should always be under Muslim control, its scientific border being believed to be a protection for the integrity of Islamic life and faith. Every Mussalman throughout the world is enjoined to sacrifice his all, if necessary, for preserving the Jazirat-ul-Arab under complete Muslim control.

The sacred places of Islam should be in the possession of the Khalifa. They should not merely be free for the entry of the Mussalmans of the world by the grace or the license of non-Muslim powers, but should be the possession and property of Islam in the fullest degree.

It is a religious obligation, on every Mussalman to go forth and help the Khalifa in every possible way where his unaided efforts in the defence of the Khilifat have failed.

The grievance of the Indian Mussalmans is that a government that pretends to protect and spread peace and happiness among them has no right to ignore or set aside these articles of their cherished faith.

According to the Peace Treaty imposed on the nominal Government at Constantinople, the Khalifa far from having the temporal authority or power needed to protect Islam, is a prisoner in his own city. He is to have no real fighting force, army or navy, and the financial control over his own territories is vested in other Governments. His capital is cut off from the rest of his possessions by an intervening permanent military occupation. It is needless to say that under these conditions he is absolutely incapable of protecting Islam as the Mussulmans of the world understand it.

The Jazirat-ul-Arab is split up; a great part of it given to powerful non-Muslim Powers, the remnant left with petty chiefs dominated all round by non-Muslim Governments.

The Holy places of Islam are all taken out of the Khalifa's kingdom, some left in the possession of minor Muslim chiefs of Arabia entirely dependent on European control, and some relegated to newly-formed non-Muslim states.

In a word, the Mussalman's free choice of a Khalifa such as Islamic tradition defines is made an unreality.

THE HINDU DHARMA

The age of misunderstanding and mutual warfare among religions is gone. If India has a mission of its own to the world, it is to establish the unity and the truth of all religions. This unity is established by mutual help and understanding between the various religions. It has come as a rare privilege to the Hindus in the fulfilment of this mission of India to stand up in defence of Islam against the onslaught of the earth-greed of the military powers of the west.

The Dharma of Hinduism in this respect is placed beyond all doubt by the Bhagavat Gita.

Those who are the votaries of other Gods and worship them with faith—even they, O Kaunteya, worship me alone, though not as the Shastra requires—IX, 23.

Whoever being devoted wishes in perfect faith to worship a particular form of such a one I maintain the same faith unshaken—VII, 21.

Hinduism will realise its fullest beauty when in the fulfilment of this cardinal tenet, its followers offer themselves as sacrifice for the protection of the faith of their brothers, the Mussalmans.

If Hindus and Mussalmans attain the height of courage and sacrifice that is needed for this battle on behalf of Islam against the greed of the West, a victory will be won not alone for Islam, but for Christianity itself. Militarism has robbed the crucified God of his name and his very cross and the World has been mistaking it to be Christianity. After the battle of Islam is won, Islam and Hinduism together can emancipate Christianity itself from the lust for power and wealth which have strangled it now and the true Christianity of the Gospels will be established. This battle of non-cooperation with its suffering and peaceful withdrawal of service will once for all establish its superiority over the power of brute force and unlimited slaughter.

What a glorious privilege it is to play our part in this history of the world, when Hinduism and Christianity will unite on behalf of Islam, and in that strife of mutual love and support each religion will attain its own truest shape and beauty.

AN ENDURING TREATY

Swaraj for India has two great problems, one internal and the other external. How can Hindus and Mussalmans so different from each other form a strong and united nation governing themselves peacefully? This was the question for years, and no one could believe that the two communities could suffer for each other till the miracle was actually worked. The Khilafat has solved the problem. By the magic of suffering, each has truly touched and captured the other's heart, and the Nation now is strong and united.

Not internal strength and unity alone has the Khilafat brought to India. The great block in the way of Indian aspiration for full freedom was the problem of external defence. How is India, left to herself defend her frontiers against her Mussalman neighbours? None but emasculated nations would accept such difficulties and responsibilities as an answer to the demand for freedom. It is only a people whose mentality has been perverted that can soothe itself with the domination by one race from a distant country, as a preventative against the aggression of another, a permanent and natural neighbour. Instead of developing strength to protect ourselves against those near whom we are permanently placed, a feeling of incurable impotence has been generated. Two strong and brave nations can live side by side, strengthening each other through enforcing constant vigilance, and maintain in full vigour each its own national strength, unity, patriotism and resources. If a nation wishes to be respected by its neighbours it has to develop and enter into honourable treaties. These

are the only natural conditions of national liberty; but not a surrender to distant military powers to save oneself from one's neighbours.

The Khilafat has solved the problem of distrust of Asiatic neighbours out of our future. The Indian struggle for the freedom of Islam has brought about a more lasting *entente* and a more binding treaty between the people of India and the people of the Mussalman states around it than all the ententes and treaties among the Governments of Europe. No wars of aggression are possible where the common people on the two sides have become grateful friends. The faith of the Mussulman is a better sanction than the seal of the European Diplomats and plenipotentiaries. Not only has this great friendship between India and the Mussulman States around it removed for all time the fear of Mussulman aggression from outside, but it has erected round India, a solid wall of defence against all aggression from beyond against all greed from Europe, Russia or elsewhere. No secret diplomacy could establish a better *entente* or a stronger federation than what this open and non-governmental treaty between Islam and India has established. The Indian support of the Khilafat has, as if by a magic wand, converted what was once the Pan-Islamic terror for Europe into a solid wall of friendship and defence for India.

THE BRITISH CONNECTION

Every nation like every individual is born free. Absolute freedom is the birthright of every people. The only limitations are those which a people may place over themselves. The British connection is invaluable as long as it is a defence against any worse connection sought to be imposed by violence. But it is only a means to an end, not a mandate of Providence of Nature. The alliance of neighbours, born of suffering for each other's sake, for ends that purify those that suffer, is necessarily a more natural and more enduring bond than one that has resulted from pure greed on the one side and weakness on the other. Where such a natural and enduring alliance has been accomplished among Asiatic peoples and not only between the respective governments, it may truly be felt to be more valuable than the British connection itself, after that connection has denied freedom or equality, and even justice.

THE ALTERNATIVE

Is violence or total surrender the only choice open to any people to whom Freedom or Justice is denied? Violence at a time when the whole world has learnt from bitter experience the futility of violence is unworthy

of a country whose ancient people's privilege, it was, to see this truth long ago.

Violence may rid a nation of its foreign masters but will only enslave it from inside. No nation can really be free which is at the mercy of its army and its military heroes. If people rely for freedom on its soldiers, the soldiers will rule the country, not the people. Till the recent awakening of the workers of Europe, this was the only freedom which the powers of Europe really enjoyed. True freedom can exist only when those who produce, not those who destroy or know only to live on other's labour, are the masters.

Even were violence the true road to freedom, is violence possible to a nation which has been emasculated and deprived of all weapons, and the whole world is hopelessly in advance of all our possibilities in the manufacture and the wielding of weapons of destruction.

Submission or withdrawal of co-operation is the real and only alternative before India. Submission to injustice puts on the tempting garb of peace and, gradual progress, but there is no surer way to death than submission to wrong.

THE FIFTH UPAYA

Our ancients classified the arts of conquest into four well-known *Upayas*. Sama, Dana, Uheda, and Danda. A fifth Upuya was recognised sometimes by our ancients, which they called *Upeshka*. It is this *Punchamopaya* that is placed by Mahatma Gandhi before the people of India in the form of Non-cooperation as an alternative, besides violence, to surrender.

Where in any case negotiations have failed and the enemy is neither corruptible nor incapable of being divided, and a resort to violence has failed or would certainly be futile the method of *Upeshka* remains to be applied to the case. Indeed, when the very existence of the power we seek to defeat really depends on our continuous co-operation with it, and where our *Upeshka* its very life, our *Upeshka* or non-co-operation is the most natural and most effective expedient that we can employ to bend it to our will.

No Englishman believes that his nation can rule or keep India for a day unless the people of India actively co-operate to maintain that rule. Whether the co-operation be given willingly or through ignorance, cupidity, habit or fear, the withdrawal of that co-operation means impossibility of foreign rule in India. Some of us may not realise this, but those who govern us have long ago known and are now keenly alive to

this truth. The active assistance of the people of this country in the supply of the money, men, and knowledge of the languages, customs and laws of the land, is the main-spring of the continuous life of the foreign administration. Indeed the circumstances of British rule in this country are such that but for a double supply of co-operation on the part of the governed, it must have broken down long ago. Any system of race domination is unnatural, and can be kept up only by active coercion through a foreign-recruited public, service invested with large powers, however much it may be helped by the perversion of mentality shaping the education of the youth of the country. The foreign recruited service must necessarily be very highly paid. This creates a wrong standard for the Indian recruited officials also. Military expenditure has to cover not only the needs of defence against foreign aggression, but also the possibilities of internal unrest and rebellion. Police charges have to go beyond the prevention and deletion of ordinary crime, for though this would be the only expenditure over the police of a self-governing people where any nation governs another, a large chapter of artificial crime has to be added to the penal code, and the work of the police extended accordingly. The military and public organisations must also be such as not only to result in outside efficiency, but also at the same time guarantee internal impotency. This is to be achieved by the adjustment and careful admixture of officers and units from different races. All this can be and is maintained only by extra cost and extra-active co-operation on the part of the people. The slightest withdrawal of assistance must put such machinery out of gear. This is the basis of the programme of progressive non violent non-co-operation that has been adopted by the National Congress.

SOME OBJECTIONS

The powerful character of the measure, however, leads some to object to non-co-operation because of that very reason. Striking as it does at the very root of Government in India, they fear that non-co-operation must lead to anarchy, and that the remedy is worse than the disease. This is an objection arising out of insufficient allowance for human nature. It is assumed that the British people will allow their connection with India to cease rather than remedy the wrongs for which we seek justice. If this assumption be correct, no doubt it must lead to separation and possibly also anarchy for a time. If the operatives in a factory have grievances, negotiations having failed, a strike would on a similar argument be never admissible. Unyielding obstinacy being presumed, it must end in the

closing down of the factory and break up of the men. But if in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases it is not the case that strikes end in this manner, it is more unlikely that, instead of righting the manifest wrongs that India complains about, the British people will value their Indian Dominion so low as to prefer to allow us to non-co-operate up to the point of separation. It would be a totally false reading of British character and British history. But if such wicked obstinacy be ultimately shown by a government, far be it from us to prefer peace at the price of abject surrender to wrong. There is no anarchy greater than the moral anarchy of surrender to unrepentant wrong. We may, however, be certain that if we show the strength and unity necessary for non-co-operation, long before we progress with it far, we shall have developed true order and true self-government wherein there is no place for anarchy.

Another fear sometimes expressed that, if non-co-operation were to succeed, the British would have to go, leaving us unable to defend ourselves against foreign aggression. If we have the self-respect, the patriotism, the tenacious purpose, and the power of organisation that are necessary to drive the British out from their entrenched position, no lesser foreign power will dare after that, undertake the futile task of conquering or enslaving us.

It is sometimes said that non-co-operation is negative and destructive of the advantages which a stable government has conferred on us. That non-co-operation is negative is merely a half-truth. Non-co-operation with the government means greater co-operation among ourselves, greater mutual dependence among the many different castes and classes of our country. Non-co-operation is not mere negation. It will lead to the recovery of the lost art of co-operation among ourselves. Long dependence on an outside government which by its interference suppressed or prevented the consequences of our differences has made us forget the duty of mutual trust and the art of friendly adjustment. Having allowed Government to do everything for us, we have gradually become incapable of doing anything for ourselves. Even if we had no grievance against this Government, non-co-operation with it for a time would be desirable so far as it would perforce lead us to trusting and working with one another and thereby strengthen the bonds of national unity.

The most tragic consequence of dependence on the complex machinery of a foreign government is the atrophy of the communal sense. The direct touch with administrative cause and effect is lost. An outside protector performs all the necessary functions of the community in a mysterious manner, and communal duties are not realised by the people.

The one reason addressed by those who deny to us the capacity for self-rule is the insufficient appreciation by the people of communal duties and discipline. It is only by actually refraining for a time from dependence on Government that we can regain self-reliance, learn first-hand the value of communal duties and build up true national co-operation. Non-co-operation is a practical and positive training in Swadharma, and Swadharma alone can lead up to Swaraj.

The negative is the best and most impressive method of enforcing the value of the positive. Few outside government circles realise in the present police anything but tyranny and corruption. But if the units of the present police were withdrawn we would soon perforce set about organising a substitute, and most people would realise the true social value of a police force. Few realise in the present taxes anything but coercion and waste, but most people would soon see that a share of every man's income is due for common purposes and that there are many limitations to the economical management of public institutions; we would begin once again to contribute directly, build up and maintain national institutions in the place of those that now mysteriously spring up and live under Government orders.

EMANCIPATION

Freedom is a priceless thing. But it is a stable possession only when it is acquired by a nation's strenuous effort. What is not by chance or outward circumstance, or given by the generous impulse of a tyrant prince or people is not a reality. A nation will truly enjoy freedom only when in the process of winning or defending its freedom, it has been purified and consolidated through and through, until liberty has become a part of its very soul. Otherwise it would be but a change of the form of government, which might please the fancy of politicians, or satisfy the classes in power, but could never emancipate a people. An Act of Parliament can never create citizens in Hindustan. The strength, spirit, and happiness of a people who have fought and won their liberty cannot be got by Reform Acts. Effort and sacrifice are the necessary conditions of real stable emancipation. Liberty unacquired, merely found, will on the test fail like the Dead-Sea-apple or the magician's plenty.

The war that the people of India have declared and which will purify and consolidate India, and forge for her a true and stable liberty is a war with the latest and most effective weapon. In this war, what has hitherto been in the world an undesirable but necessary incident in freedom's battles, the killing of innocent men, has been eliminated; and that which

is the true essential for forging liberty, the self-purification and self-strengthening of men and women has been kept pure and unalloyed. It is for men, women and youth, every one of them that lives in and loves India, to do his bit in this battle, not waiting for others, not calculating the chances of his surviving the battle to enjoy the fruits of his sacrifice. Soldiers in the old-world wars did not insure their lives before going to the front. The privilege of youth in special is for country's sake to exercise their comparative freedom and give up the yearning for lives and careers built on the slavery of the people.

That on which a foreign government truly rests whatever may be the illusions on their or our part is not the strength of its armed forces, but our own co-operation. Actual service on the part of one generation, and educational preparation for future service on the part of the next generation are the two main branches of this co-operation of slaves in the perpetuation of slavery. The boycott of government service and the law-courts is aimed at the first, the boycott of government controlled schools is to stop the second. If either the one or the other of these two branches of co-operation is withdrawn in sufficient measure, there will be an automatic and perfectly peaceful change from slavery to liberty.

The best preparation for any one who desires to take part in the great battle now going on is a silent study of the writings and speeches collected herein, and proposed to be completed in a supplementary volume to be soon issued.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

2. THE KHILAFAT

WHY I HAVE JOINED THE KHILAFAT MOVEMENT

An esteemed South African friend who is at present living in England has written to me a letter from which I make the following excerpts:—

“You will doubtless remember having met me in South Africa at the time when the Rev. J.J. Doke was assisting you in your campaign there and I subsequently returned to England deeply impressed with the rightness of your attitude in that country. During the months before war I wrote and lectured and spoke on your behalf in several places which I do not regret. Since returning from military service, however, I have noticed from the papers that you appear to be adopting a more militant attitude... I notice a report in “The Times” that you are assisting and countenancing a union between the Hindus and Moslems with a view of embarrassing

England and the Allied Powers in the matter of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire or the ejection of the Turkish Government from Constantinople. Knowing as I do your sense of justice and your humane instincts I feel that I am entitled, in view of the humble part that I have taken to promote your interests on this side, to ask you whether this latter report is correct. I cannot believe that you have wrongly countenanced a movement to place the cruel and unjust despotism of the Stamboul Government above the interests of humanity, for if any country has crippled these interests in the East it has surely been Turkey. I am personally familiar with the conditions in Syria and Armenia and I can only suppose that if the report, which "The Times" has published is correct, you have thrown to one side, your moral responsibilities and allied yourself with one of the prevailing anarchies. However, until I hear that this is not your attitude I cannot prejudice my mind. Perhaps you will do me the favour of sending me a reply." I have sent a reply to the writer. But as the views expressed in the quotation are likely to be shared by many of my English friends and as I do not wish, if I can possibly help it, to forfeit their friendship or their esteem I shall endeavour to state my position as clearly as I can on the Khilafat question. The letter shows what risk public men run through irresponsible journalism. I have not seen *The Times* report, referred to by my friend. But it is evident that the report has made the writer to suspect my alliance with "the prevailing anarchies" and to think that I have "thrown to one side" my "moral responsibilities."

It is just my sense of moral responsibilities which has made me take up the Khilafat question and to identify myself entirely with the Mahomedans. It is perfectly true that I am assisting and countenancing the union between Hindus and Muslims, but certainly not with "a view of embarrassing England and the Allied Powers in the matter of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire," it is contrary to my creed to embarrass governments or anybody else. This does not, however, mean that certain acts of mine may not result in embarrassment. But I should not hold myself responsible for having caused embarrassment when I resist the wrong of a wrong-doer by refusing assistance in his wrongdoing. On the Khilafat question I refuse to be party to a broken pledge. Mr. Lloyd George's solemn declaration is practically the whole of the case for Indian Mahomedans and when that case is fortified by scriptural authority it becomes unanswerable. Moreover, it is incorrect to say that I have "allied myself to one of the prevailing anarchies" or that I have wrongly countenanced the movement to place the cruel and unjust despotism of the Stamboul Government above the interests of humanity.

In the whole of the Mahomedan demand there is no insistance on the retention of the so-called unjust despotism of the Stamboul Government; on the contrary the Mahomedans have accepted the principle of taking full guarantees from that Government for the protection of non-Muslim minorities. I do not know how far the condition of Armenia and Syria may be considered an 'anarchy' and how far the Turkish Government may be held responsible for it. I much suspect that the reports from these quarters are much exaggerated and that the European powers are themselves in a measure responsible for what misrule there may be in Armenia and Syria. But I am in no way interested in supporting Turkish or any other anarchy. The Allied Powers can easily prevent it by means other than that of ending Turkish rule or dismembering and weakening the Ottoman Empire. The Allied Powers are not dealing with a new situation. If Turkey was to be partitioned, the position should have been made clear at the commencement of the war. There would then have been no question of a broken pledge. As it is, no Indian Mahomedan has any regard for the promises of British Ministers. In his opinion, the cry against Turkey is that of Christianity vs. Islam with England as the louder in the cry. The latest cablegram from Mr. Mahomed Ali strengthens the impression, for he says that unlike as in England his deputation is receiving much support from the French Government and the people.

Thus, if it is true, as I hold it is true that the Indian Mussalmans have a cause that is just and is supported by scriptural authority, then for the Hindus not to support them to the utmost would be a cowardly breach of brotherhood and they would forfeit all claim to consideration from their Mahomedan countrymen. As a public-server, therefore, I would be unworthy of the position I claim, if I did not support Indian Mussalmans in their struggle to maintain the Khilafat in accordance with their religious belief. I believe that in supporting them I am rendering a service to the Empire, because by assisting my Mahomedan countrymen to give a disciplined expression to their sentiment it becomes possible to make the agitation thoroughly, orderly and even successful.

THE TURKISH TREATY

The Turkish treaty will be out on the 10th of May. It is stated to provide for the internationalisation of the Straits, the occupation of Gallipoli by the Allies, the maintenance of Allied contingents in Constantinople and the appointment of a Commission of Control over Turkish finances. The San Remo Conference has entrusted Britain with Mandates for Mesopotamia and Palestine and France with the Mandate

for Syria. As regards Smyrna the accounts so far received inform that Turkish suzerainty over Smyrna will be indicated by the fact that the population will not be entitled to send delegates to the Greek Parliament but at the end of five years local Smyrna Parliament will have the right of voting in favour of union with Greece and in such an event Turkish suzerainty will cease. Turkish suzerainty will be confined to the area within the Chatalja lines. With regard to Emir Foisul's position there is no news except that the Mandates of Britain and France transform his military title into a civil title.

We have given above the terms of the Turkish treaty as indicated in Router's messages. These reports are incomplete and all of them are not equally authenticated. But if these terms are true, they are a challenge to the Muslim demands. Turkish Sovereignty is confined to the Chatalja lines. This means that the Big Three of the Supreme Council have cut off Thrace from Turkish dominions. This is a distinct breach of the pledge given by one of these Three, *viz.*, the Premier of the British Empire. To remain within the Chatalja lines and, we are afraid, as a dependent of the Allies, is for the Sultan a humiliating position inconsistent with the Koranic injunctions. Such a restricted position of the Turks is virtually a success of the bag and baggage school.

It is not yet known how the Supreme Council disposed of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor. If Mr. Lloyd George's views recently expressed in this respect have received the Allies' sanction—it is probable—nothing less than a common control is expected. The decision in the case of Smyrna will be satisfying to none, though the Allies seem to have made by their arrangement a skillful attempt to please all the parties concerned. Mr. Lloyd George, in his reply to the Khilafat Deputation, had talked about the careful investigations by an impartial committee and had added; "The great majority of the population undoubtedly prefer Greek rule to Turkish rule, so I understand" but the decision postpones to carry out his understanding till a period of five years.

When we come to the question of mandates, the Allied Powers' motives come out more distinctly. The Arabs' claim of independence was used as a difficulty against keeping Turkish Sovereignty. This was defended in the self-determination and by pointing out parallels of Transylvania and other provinces. When the final moment came, the Allies have ventured to divide the spoils amongst themselves. Britain is given the mandate over Mesopotamia and Palestine and France has the mandate over Syria. The Arab delegation complains in their note lately issued

expressing their disappointment at the Supreme Council's decision with regard to the Arab liberated countries, which, it declares, is contrary to the principle of self-determination.

So what little news has arrived about the Turkish treaty, is uniformly disquieting. The Moslems have found sufficient ground to honour Russia, more than the Allies. Russia has recognised the freedom of Khiva and Bokhara. The Moslem world, as H. M. the Amir of Afghanistan said in his speech, will feel grateful towards Russia in spite of all the rumours abroad about its anarchy and disorder, whereas the whole Moslem world will resent the action of the other European nations who have allied with each other to carry out a joint coercion and extinction of Turkey in the name of self-determination and partly in the guise of the interest of civilization.

The terms of the Turkish treaty are not only a breach of the Premier's pledge, not only a sin against the principle of self-determination, but they also show a reckless indifference of the Allied Powers towards the Koranic injunctions. The terms point out that Mr. Lloyd George's misinformed ideas of Khilafat have prevailed in the Council. Like Mr. Lloyd George other statesmen also at San Remo have compared Caliphate with Popedom and ignored the Koranic idea of associating spiritual power with temporal power. These misguided statesmen were too much possessed by haughtiness and so they refused to receive any enlightenment on the question of Khilafat from the Deputation. They could have corrected themselves had they heard Mr. Mahomed Ali on this point. Speaking at the Essex Hall meeting Mr. Mahomed Ali distinguished between Popedom and Caliphate and clearly explained what Caliphate means. He said:

"Islam is supernational and not national, the basis of Islamic sympathy is a common outlook on life and common culture.... And it has two centres. The personal centre is the island of Arabia. The Khalifa is the Commander of the Faithful and his orders must be obeyed by all Muslims so long and so long only, as they are not at variance with the Commandments of God and the Traditions of the Prophet. But since there is no lacerating distinction between things temporal and things spiritual, the Khalifa is something more than a Pope and cannot be "Vaticanised." But he is also less than a Pope for he is not infallible. If he persists in un-Islamic conduct we can depose him. And we have deposed him more than once. But so long as he orders only that which Islam demands we must support him. He and no other ruler is the Defender of *our* faith."

These few words could have removed the mis-undertakings rooted in the minds of those that at San Remo, if they were in earnest for a just

solution. But Mr. Mahomed Ali's deputation was not given any hearing by the Peace Conference. They were told that the Peace Conference had already heard the official delegation of India on this question. But the wrong notions the Allies still entertain about Caliphate are a sufficient indication of the effects of the work of this official delegation. The result of these wrong notions is the present settlement and this unjust settlement will unsettle the world. They know not what they do.

TURKISH PEACE TERMS

The question of question to-day is the Khilafat question, otherwise known as that of the Turkish peace terms. His Excellency the Viceroy deserves our thanks for receiving the joint deputation even at this late hour, especially when he was busy preparing to receive the head of the different provinces. His Excellency must be thanked for the unfailing courtesy with which he received the deputation and the courteous language in which his reply was couched. But mere courtesy, valuable as it is at all times, never so valuable as at this, is not enough at this critical moment. 'Sweet words butter no parsnips' is a proverb more applicable to-day than ever before. Behind the courtesy there was the determination to punish Turkey. Punishment of Turkey is a thing which Muslim sentiment cannot tolerate for a moment. Muslim soldiers are as responsible for the result of the war as any others. It was to appease them that Mr. Asquith said when Turkey decided to join the Central Powers that the British Government had no designs on Turkey and that His Majesty's Government would never think of punishing the Sultan for the misdeeds of the Turkish Committee. Examined by that standard the Viceregal reply is not only disappointing but it is a fall from truth and justice.

What is this British Empire? It is as much Mahomedan and Hindu as it is Christian. Its religious neutrality is not a virtue, or if it is, it is a virtue of necessity. Such a mighty Empire could not be held together on any other terms. British ministers are therefore bound to protect Mahomedan interests as any other. Indeed as the Muslim rejoinder says, they are bound to make the cause their own. What is the use of His Excellency having presented the Muslim claim before the Conference? If the cause is lost the Mahomedans will be entitled to think that Britain did not do her duty by them. And the Viceregal reply confirms the view. When His Excellency says that Turkey must suffer for her having joined the Central Powers he but expresses the opinion of British ministers. We hope, therefore, with the framers of the Muslim rejoinder that His Majesty's ministers will

mend the mistakes if any have been committed and secure a settlement that would satisfy Mahomedan sentiment.

What does the sentiment demand? The preservation of the Khilafat with such guarantee as may be necessary for the protection of the interests of the non-Muslim races living under Turkish rule and the Khalif's control over Arabia and the Holy Places with such arrangement as may be required for guaranteeing Arab self-rule, should the Arabs desire it. It is hardly possible to state the claim more fairly than has been done. It is a claim backed by justice, by the declarations of British ministers and by the unanimous Hindu and Muslim opinion. It would be midsummer madness to reject or whittle down a claim so backed.

THE SUZERAINTY OVER ARABIA

“As I told you in my last letter I think Mr. Gandhi has made a serious mistake in the Kailafat business. The Indian Mahomedans base their demand on the assertion that their religion requires the Turkish rule over Arabia: but when they have against them in this matter, the Arabs themselves, it is impossible to regard the theory of the Indian Mahomedans as essential to Islam. After all if the Arabs do not represent Islam, who does? It is as if the German Roman Catholics made a demand in the name of Roman Catholicism with Rome and the Italians making a contrary demand. But even if the religion of the Indian Mahomedans did require that Turkish rule should be imposed upon the Arabs against their will, one could not, now-a-days, recognise as a really religious demand, one which required the continued oppression of one people by another. When an assurance was given at the beginning of the war to the Indian Mahomedans that the Mahomedan religion would be respected, that could never have meant that a temporal sovereignty which violated the principles of self-determination would be upheld. We could not now stand by and see the Turks re-conquer the Arabs (for the Arabs would certainly fight against them) without grossly betraying the Arabs to whom we have given pledges. It is not true that the Arab hostility to the Turks was due simply to European suggestion. No doubt, during the war we availed ourselves of the Arab hostility to the Turks to get another ally, but the hostility had existed long before the war. The Non-Turkish Mahomedan subjects of the Sultan in general wanted to get rid of his rule. It is the Indian Mahomedans who have no experience of that rule who want to impose it on others. As a matter of fact the idea of any restoration of Turkish rule in Syria or Arabia, seems so remote from all possibilities that to discuss it seems like discussing a restoration of the Holy Roman Empire. I cannot

conceive what series of events could bring it about. The Indian Mahomedans certainly could not march into Arabia themselves and conquer the Arabs for the Sultan. And no amount of agitation and trouble in India would ever induce England to put back Turkish rule in Arabia. In this matter it is not English Imperialism which the Indian Mahomedans are up against, but the mass of English Liberal and Humanitarian opinion, the mass of the better opinion of England, which wants self-determination to go forward in India. Supposing the Indian Mahomedans could stir up an agitation so violent in India as to sever the connection between India and the British Crown, still they would not be any nearer to their purpose. For to-day they do have considerable influence on British world-policy. Even if in this matter of the Turkish question their influence has not been sufficient to turn the scale against the very heavy weights on the other side, it has weighed in the scale. But apart from the British connection, Indian Mahomedans would have no influence at all outside India. They would not count for more in world politics than the Mahomedans of China. I think it is likely (apart from the pressure of America on the other side. I should say certain) that the influence of the Indian Mahomedans may at any rate avail to keep the Sultan in Constantinople. But I doubt whether they will gain any advantage by doing so. For a Turkey cut down to the Turkish parts of Asia-Minor, Constantinople would be a very inconvenient capital. I think its inconvenience would more than outweigh the sentimental gratification of keeping up a phantom of the old Ottoman Empire. But if the Indian Mahomedans want the Sultan to retain his place in Constantinople I think the assurances given officially by the Viceroy in India now binds us to insist on his remaining there and I think he will remain there in spite of America."

This is an extract, from the letter of an Englishman enjoying a position in Great Britain, to a friend in India. It is a typical letter, sober, honest, to the point and put in such graceful language that whilst it challenges you, it commands your respect by its very gracefulness. But it is just this attitude based upon insufficient or false information which has ruined many a cause in the British Isles. The superficiality, the one-sidedness the inaccuracy and often even dishonesty that have crept into modern journalism, continuously mislead honest men who want to see nothing but justice done. Then there are always interested groups whose business it is to serve their ends by means of foul or food. And the honest Englishman wishing to vote for justice but swayed by conflicting opinions and dominated by distorted versions, often ends by becoming an instrument of injustice.

The writer of the letter quoted above has built up convincing argument on imaginary data. He has successfully shown that the Mahomedan case, as it has been presented to him, is a rotten case. In India, where it is not quite easy to distort facts about the Khilafat, English friends admit the utter justice of the Indian-Mahomedan claim. But they plead helplessness and tell us that the Government of India and Mr. Montagu have done all it was humanly possible for them to do. And if now the judgment goes against Islam, Indian Mahomedans should resign themselves to it. This extraordinary state of things would not be possible except under this modern rush and preoccupations of all responsible people.

Let us for a moment examine the case as it has been imagined by the writer. He suggests that Indian Mahomedans want Turkish rule in Arabia in spite of the opposition of the Arabs themselves, and that, if the Arabs do not want Turkish rule, the writer argues, no false religious sentiment can be permitted to interfere with self-determination of the Arabs when India herself has been pleading for that very status. Now the fact is that the Mahomedans, as is known to everybody who has at all studied the case, have never asked for Turkish rule in Arabia in opposition to the Arabs. On the contrary, they have said that they have no intention of resisting Arabian self-government. All they ask for is Turkish suzerainty over Arabia which would guarantee complete self-rule for the Arabs. They want Khalif's control of the Holy Places of Islam. In other words they ask for nothing more than what was guaranteed by Mr. Lloyd George and on the strength of which guarantee Mahomedan soldiers split their blood on behalf of the Allied Powers. All the elaborate argument therefore and the cogent reasoning of the above extract fall to pieces based as they are upon a case that has never existed. I have thrown myself heart and soul into this question because British pledges abstract justice, and religious sentiment coincide. I can conceive the possibility of a blind and fanatical religious sentiment existing in opposition to pure justice. I should then resist the former and fight for the latter. Nor would I insist upon pledges given dishonestly to support an unjust cause as has happened with England in the case of the secret treaties. Resistance there becomes not only lawful but obligatory on the part of a nation that prides itself on its righteousness.

It is unnecessary for me to examine the position imagined by the English friend, viz., how India would have fared had she been an independent power. It is unnecessary because Indian Mahomedans, and for that matter India, are fighting for a cause that is admittedly just; a cause in aid of which they are invoking the whole-hearted support of the British people. I would however venture to suggest that this is a cause in

which mere sympathy will not suffice. It is a cause which demands support that is strong enough to bring about substantial justice.

FURTHER QUESTIONS ANSWERED

I have been overwhelmed with public criticism and private advice and even anonymous letters telling me exactly what I should do. Some are impatient that I do not advise immediate and extensive non-co-operation; others tell me what harm I am doing the country by throwing it knowingly in a tempest of violence on either side. It is difficult for me to deal with the whole of the criticism, but I would summarize some of the objections and endeavour to answer them to the best of my ability. These are in addition to those I have already answered:—

(1) Turkish claim is immoral or unjust and how can I, a lover of truth and justice, support it?

(2) Even if the claim be just in theory, the Turk is hopelessly incapable, weak and cruel. He does not deserve any assistance.

(3) Even if Turkey deserves all that is claimed for her, why should I land India in an international struggle?

(4) It is no part of the Indian Mahomedans' business to meddle in this affair. If they cherish any political ambition, they have tried, they have failed and they should now sit still. If it is a religious matter with them, it cannot appeal to the Hindu reason in the manner it is put and in any case Hindus ought not to identify themselves with Mahomedans in their religious quarrel with Christendom.

(5) In no case should I advocate non-co-operation which in its extreme sense is nothing but a rebellion, no matter how peaceful it may be.

(6) Moreover, my experience of last year must show me that it is beyond the capacity of any single human being to control the forces of violence that are lying dormant in the land.

(7) Non-co-operation is futile because people will never respond in right earnest, and reaction that might afterwards set in will be worse than the state of hopefulness we are now in.

(8) Non-co-operation will bring about cessation of all other activities, even working of the Reforms, thus set back the clock of progress.

(9) However pure my motives may be, those of the Mussalmans are obviously revengeful.

I shall now answer the objections in the order in which they are stated—

(1) In my opinion the Turkish claim is not only immoral and unjust, but it is highly equitable, if only because Turkey wants to retain what is

her own. And the Mahomedan manifesto has definitely declared that whatever guarantees may be necessary to be taken for the protection of non-Muslim and non-Turkish races, should be taken so as to give the Christians theirs and the Arabs their self-government under the Turkish suzerainty.

(2) I do not believe the Turk to be weak, incapable or cruel. He is certainly disorganised and probably without good generalship. He has been obliged to fight against heavy odds. The argument of weakness, incapacity and cruelty one often hears quoted in connection with those from whom power is sought to be taken away. About the alleged massacres a proper commission has been asked for, but never granted. And in any case security can be taken against oppression.

(3) I have already stated that if I were not interested in the Indian Mahomedans, I would not interest myself in the welfare of the Turks any more than I am in that of the Austrians or the Poles. But I am bound as an Indian to share the sufferings and trial of fellow-Indians. If I deem the Mahomedan to be my brother. It is my duty to help him in his hour of peril to the best of my ability, if his cause commends itself to me as just.

(4) The fourth refers to the extent Hindus should join hands with the Mahomedans. It is therefore a matter of feeling and opinion. It is expedient to suffer for my Mahomedan brother to the utmost in a just cause and I should therefore travel with him along the whole road so long as the means employed by him are as honourable as his end. I cannot regulate the Mahomedan feeling. I must accept his statement that the Khilafat is with him a religious question in the sense that it binds him to reach the goal even at the cost of his own life.

(5) I do not consider non-co-operation to be a rebellion, because it is free from violence. In a larger sense all opposition to a Government measure is a rebellion. In that sense, rebellion in a just cause is a duty, the extent of opposition being determined by the measure of the injustice done and felt.

(6) My experience of last year shows me that in spite of aberrations in some parts of India, the country was entirely under control that the influence of Satyagraha was profoundly for its good and that where violence did break out there were local causes that directly contributed to it. At the same time I admit that even the violence that did take place on the part of the people and the spirit of lawlessness that was undoubtedly shown in some parts should have remained under check. I have made ample acknowledgment of the miscalculation I then made. But all the painful experience that I then gained did not any way shake my belief in

Satyagraha or in the possibility of that matchless force being utilised in India. Ample provision is being made this time to avoid the mistakes of the past. But I must refuse to be deterred from a clear course; because it may be attended by violence totally unintended and in spite of extraordinary efforts that are being made to prevent it. At the same time I must make my position clear. Nothing can possibly prevent a Satyagrahi from doing his duty because of the frown of the authorities. I would risk, if necessary, a million lives so long as they are voluntary sufferers and are innocent, spotless victims. It is the mistakes of the people that matter in a Satyagraha campaign. Mistakes, even insanity must be expected from the strong and the powerful, and the moment of victory has come when there is no retort to the mad fury of the powerful, but a voluntary, dignified and quiet submission but not submission to the will of the authority that has put itself in the wrong. The secret of success lies therefore in holding every English life and the life of every officer serving the Government as sacred as those of our own dear ones. All the wonderful experience I have gained now during nearly 40 years of conscious existence, has convinced me that there is no gift so precious as that of life. I make bold to say that the moment the Englishmen feel that although they are in India in a hopeless minority, their lives are protected against harm not because of the matchless weapons of destruction which are at their disposal, but because Indians refuse to take the lives even of those whom they may consider to be utterly in the wrong that moment will see a transformation in the English nature in its relation to India and that moment will also be the moment when all the destructive cutlery that is to be had in India will begin to rust. I know that this is a far-off vision. That cannot matter to me. It is enough for me to see the light and to act up to it, and it is more than enough when I gain companions in the onward march. I have claimed in private conversations with English friends that it is because of my incessant preaching of the gospel of non-violence and my having successfully demonstrated its practical utility that so far the forces of violence, which are undoubtedly in existence in connection with the Khilafat movement, have remained under complete control.

(7) From a religious standpoint the seventh objection is hardly worth considering. If people do not respond to the movement of non-co-operation, it would be a pity, but that can be no reason for a reformer not to try. It would be to me a demonstration that the present position of hopefulness is not dependent on any inward strength or knowledge, but it is hope born of ignorance and superstition.

(8) If non-co-operation is taken up in earnest, it must bring about a cessation of all other activities including the Reforms, but I decline to draw therefore the corollary that it will set back the clock of progress. On the contrary, I consider non-co-operation to be such a powerful and pure instrument; that if it is enforced in an earnest spirit, it will be like seeking first the Kingdom of God and everything else following as a matter of course. People will have then realised their true power. They would have learnt the value of discipline, self-control, joint action, non-violence, organisation and everything else that goes to make a nation great and good, and not merely great.

(9) I do not know that I have a right to arrogate greater purity for myself than for our Mussalman brethren. But I do admit that they do not believe in my doctrine of non-violence to the full extent. For them it is a weapon of the weak, an expedient. They consider non-co-operation without violence to be the only thing open to them in the war of direct action. I know that if some of them could offer successful violence, they would do to-day. But they are convinced that humanly speaking it is an impossibility. For them, therefore, non-co-operation is a matter not merely of duty but also of revenge. Whereas I take up non-co-operation against the Government as I have actually taken it up in practice against members of my own family. I entertain very high regard for the British constitution, I have not only no enmity against Englishmen but I regard much in English character as worthy of my emulation. I count many as my friends. It is against my religion to regard any one as an enemy. I entertain similar sentiments with respect to Mahomedans. I find their cause to be just and pure. Although therefore their viewpoint is different from mine I do not hesitate to associate with them and invite them to give my method a trial, for, I believe that the use of a pure weapon even from a mistaken motive does not fail to produce some good, even as the telling of truth if only because for the time being it is the best policy, is at least so much to the good.

MR. CANDLER'S OPEN LETTER

Mr. Candler has favoured me with an open letter on this question of questions. The letter has already appeared in the Press. I can appreciate Mr. Candler's position as I would like him and other Englishmen to appreciate mine and that of hundreds of Hindus who feel as I do. Mr. Candler's letter is an attempt to show that Mr. Lloyd George's pledge is not in any way broken by the peace terms. I quite agree with him that Mr. Lloyd George's words ought not to be torn from their context to support

the Mahomedan claim. These are Mr. Lloyd George's words as quoted in the recent Viceregal message: "Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race." Mr. Candler seems to read 'which', as if it meant 'if they,' whereas I give the pronoun its natural meaning, namely, that the Prime Minister knew in 1918, that the lands referred to by him were "predominantly Turkish in race." And if this is the meaning I venture to suggest that the pledge has been broken in a most barefaced manner, for there is practically nothing left to the Turk of 'the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace.'

I have already my view of the retention of the Sultan in Constantinople. It is an insult to the intelligence of man to suggest that 'the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homeland of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople has been left unimpaired by the terms of peace. This is the other passage from the speech which I presume Mr. Candler wants me to read together with the one already quoted:—

"While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the home-land of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople, the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalised, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are in our judgment entitled to a recognition of their separate national condition."

Did that mean entire removal of Turkish influence, extinction of Turkish suzerainty and the introduction of European-Christian influence under the guise of Mandates? Have the Moslems of Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine been committed, or is the new arrangement being superimposed upon them by Powers conscious of their own brute-strength rather than of justice of their action? I for one would nurse by every legitimate means the spirit of independence in the brave Arabs, but I shudder to think what will happen to them under the schemes of exploitation of their country by the greedy capitalists protected as they will be by the mandatory Powers. If the pledge is to be fulfilled, let these places have full self-government with suzerainty to be retained with Turkey as has been suggested by the *Times of India*. Let there be all the necessary guarantees taken from Turkey about the internal independence of the Arabs. But to remove that suzerainty, to deprive the Khalif of the wardenship of the Holy Places is to render Khilafat a mockery which no Mahomedan can possibly look upon with equanimity, I am not alone in my interpretation of the pledge. The Right Hon'ble Ameer Ali calls the peace terms a breach of faith. Mr. Charles Roberts reminds the British public that the Indian Mussalman sentiment regarding the Turkish Treaty

is based upon the Prime Minister's pledge "regarding Thrace, Constantinople and Turkish lands in Asia Minor, repeated on February 26 last with deliberation by Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Roberts holds that the pledge must be treated as a whole, not as binding only regarding Constantinople but also binding as regards Thrace and Asia Minor. He describes the pledge as binding upon the nation as a whole and its breach in any part as a gross breach of faith on the part of the British Empire. He demands that if there is an unanswerable reply to the charge of breach of faith it ought to be given and adds the Prime Minister may regard his own word lightly if he chooses, but he has no right to break a pledge given on behalf of the nation. He concludes that it is incredible that such pledge should not have been kept in the letter and in the spirit." He adds: "I have reason to believe that these views are fully shared by prominent members of the Cabinet."

I wonder if Mr. Candler knows what is going on to-day in England. Mr. Pickthall writing in *New Age* says: "No impartial international enquiry into the whole question of the Armenian massacres has been instituted in the ample time which has elapsed since the conclusion of armistice with Turkey. The Turkish Government has asked for such enquiry. But the Armenian organisations and the Armenian partisans refuse to hear of such a thing, declaring that the Bryce and Lepssens reports are quite sufficient to condemn the Turks. In other words the judgment should be given on the case for prosecution alone. The inter-allied commission which investigated the unfortunate events in Smyrna last year, made a report unfavourable to Greek claims. Therefore, that report has not been published here in England, though in other countries it has long been public property." He then goes on to show how money is being scattered by Armenian and Greek emissaries in order to popularise their cause and adds: "This conjunction of dense ignorance and cunning falsehood is fraught with instant danger to the British realm," and concludes: "A Government and people which prefer propaganda to fact as the ground of policy—and foreign policy at that—is self-condemned."

I have reproduced the above extract in order to show that the present British policy has been affected by propaganda of an unscrupulous nature. Turkey which was dominant over two million square miles of Asia, Africa and Europe in the 17th century, under the terms of the treaty, says the *London Chronicle*, has dwindled down to little more than 1,000 square miles. It says, "All European Turkey could now be accommodated comfortably between the Landsend and the Tamar, Cornwall alone exceeding its total area and but for its alliance with Germany, Turkey

could have been assured of retaining at least sixty thousand square miles of the Eastern Balkans." I do not know whether the *Chronicle* view is generally shared. Is it by way of punishment that Turkey is to undergo such shrinkage, or is it because justice demands it? If Turkey had not made the mistake of joining Germany, would the principle of nationality have been still applied to Armenia, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Palestine?

Let me now remind those who think with Mr. Candler that the promise was not made by Mr. Lloyd George to the people of India in anticipation of the supply of recruits continuing. In defending his own statement Mr. Lloyd George is reported to have said:

"The effect of the statement in India was that recruiting went up appreciably from that very moment. They were not all Mahomedans but there were many Mahomedans amongst them. Now we are told that was an offer to Turkey. But they rejected it, and therefore we were absolutely free. It was not. It is too often forgotten that we are the greatest Mahomedan power in the world and one-fourth of the population of the British Empire is Mahomedan. There have been no more loyal adherents to the throne and no more effective and loyal supporters of the Empire in its hour of trial. *We gave a solemn pledge and they accepted it.* They are disturbed by the prospect of our not abiding by it."

Who shall interpret that pledge and how? How did the Government of India itself interpret it? Did it or did it not energetically support the claim for the control of the Holy Places of Islam vesting in the Khalif? Did the Government of India suggest that the whole of Jazirat-ul-Arab could be taken away consistently with that pledge from the sphere of influence of the Khalif, and given over to the Allies as mandatory Powers? Why does the Government of India sympathise with the Indian Mussalmans if the terms are all they should be? So much for the pledge. I would like to guard myself against being understood that I stand or fall absolutely by Mr. Lloyd George's declaration. I have advisedly used the adverb 'practically' in connection with it. It is an important qualification.'

Mr. Candler seems to suggest that my goal is something more than merely attaining justice on the Khilafat. If so, he is right. Attainment of justice is undoubtedly the corner-stone, and if I found that I was wrong in my conception of justice on this question, I hope I shall have the courage immediately to retrace my steps. But by helping the Mahomedans of India at a critical moment in their history, I want to buy their friendship. Moreover, if I can carry the Mahomedans with me I hope to wean Great Britain from the downward path along which the Prime Minister seems to me to be taking her. I hope also to show to India and the Empire at

large that given a certain amount of capacity for self-sacrifice, justice can be secured by peacefulest and cleanest means without sowing or increasing bitterness between English and Indians. For, whatever may be the temporary effect of my methods, I know enough of them to feel certain that they alone are immune from lasting bitterness. They are untainted with hatred, expedience or untruth.

IN PROCESS OF KEEPING

The writer of 'Current Topics' in the "Times of India" has attempted to challenge the statement made in my Khilafat article regarding ministerial pledges, and in doing so cites Mr. Asquith's Guild-Hall speech of November 10, 1914. When I wrote the articles, I had in mind Mr. Asquith's speech. I am sorry that he ever made that speech. For, in my humble opinion, it betrayed to say the least, a confusion of thought. Could he think of the Turkish people as apart from the Ottoman Government? And what is the meaning of the death-knell of Ottoman Dominion in Europe and Asia if it be not the death knell of Turkish people as a free and governing race? Is it, again, true historically that the Turkish rule has always been a blight that 'has withered some of the fairest regions of the earth?' And what is the meaning of his statement that followed, viz., "Nothing is further from our thoughts than to imitate or encourage a crusade against their belief?" If words have any meaning, the qualifications that Mr. Asquith introduced in his speech should have meant a scrupulous regard for Indian Muslim feeling. And if that be the meaning of his speech, without anything further to support me I would claim that even Mr. Asquith's assurance is in danger of being set at nought if the resolutions of the San Remo Conference are to be crystallised into action. But I base remarks on a considered speech made by Mr. Asquith's successor two years later when things had assumed a more threatening shape than in 1914 and when the need for Indian help was much greater than in 1914. His pledge would bear repetition till it is fulfilled. He said: "Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race. We do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople." If only every word of this pledge is fulfilled both in letter and in spirit, there would be little left for quarrelling about. In so far as Mr. Asquith's declaration can be considered hostile to the Indian Muslim claim, it is superseded by the later and more considered declaration of Mr. Lloyd George—a declaration made irrevocable by fulfilment of the consideration it expected, viz. the

enlistment of the brave Mahomedan soldiery which fought in the very place which is now being partitioned in spite of the pledge. But the writer of 'Current Topics' says Mr. Lloyd George "is now in process of keeping his pledge" I hope he is right. But what has already happened gives little ground for any such hope. For, imprisonment or internment of the Khalif in his own capital will be not only a mockery of fulfilment but it would be adding injury to insult. Either the Turkish Empire is to be maintained in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople or it is not. If it is, let the Indian Mahomedans feel the full glow of it or if the Empire is to be broken up, let the mask of hypocrisy be lifted and India see the truth in its nakedness. To join the Khilafat movement then means to join a movement to keep inviolate the pledge of a British minister. Surely, such a movement is worth much greater sacrifice than may be involved in non-co-operation.

APPEAL TO THE VICEROY

Your Excellency.

As one who has enjoyed a certain measure of your Excellency's confidence, and as one who claims to be a devoted well-wisher of the British Empire, I owe it to your Excellency, and through your Excellency to His Majesty's Ministers, to explain my connection with and my conduct in the Khilafat question.

At the very earliest stages of the war, even whilst I was in London organising the Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps, I began to interest myself in the Khilafat question. I perceived how deeply moved the little Mussalman World in London was when Turkey decided to throw in her lot with Germany. On my arrival in India in the January of 1915, I found the same anxiousness and earnestness among the Mussalmans with whom I came in contact. Their anxiety became intense when the information about the Secret Treaties leaked out. Distrust of British intentions filled their minds, and despair took possession of them. Even at that moment I advised my Mussalman friends not to give way to despair, but to express their fear and their hopes in a disciplined manner. It will be admitted that the whole of Mussalman India has behaved in a singularly restrained manner during the past five years and that the leaders have been able to keep the turbulent sections of their community under complete control.

The peace terms and your Excellency's defence of them have given the Mussalmans of India a shock from which it will be difficult for them to recover. The terms violate ministerial pledges and utterly disregard Mussalman sentiment. I consider that as a staunch Hindu wishing to live

on terms of the closest friendship with my Mussalman countrymen. I should be an unworthy son of India if I did not stand by them in their hour of trial. In my humble opinion their cause is just. They claim that Turkey must be *punished* if their sentiment is to be respected. Muslim soldiers did fight to inflict punishment on their own Khalifa or to deprive him of his territories. The Mussalman attitude has been consistent, throughout these five years.

My duty to the Empire to which I owe my loyalty requires me to resist the cruel violence that has been done to the Mussalman sentiment. So far as I am aware, Mussulmans and Hindus have as a whole lost faith in British justice and honour. The report of the majority of the Hunter Committee, Your Excellency's despatch thereon and Mr. Montagu's reply have only aggravated the distrust.

In these circumstances the only course open to one like me is either in despair to sever all connection with British rule, or, if I still retained faith in the inherent superiority of the British constitution to all others at present in vogue to adopt such means as will rectify the wrong done, and thus restore confidence. I have not lost faith in such superiority and I am not without hope that somehow or other justice will yet be rendered if we show the requisite capacity for suffering. Indeed, my conception of that constitution is that it helps only those who are ready to help themselves. I do not believe that it protects the weak. It gives free scope to the strong to maintain their strength and develop it. The weak under it go to the wall.

It is, then, because I believe in the British constitution that I have advised my Mussalman friends to withdraw their support from your Excellency's Government and the Hindus to join them, should the peace terms not be revised in accordance with the solemn pledges of Ministers and the Muslim sentiment.

Three courses were open to the Mahomedans in order to mark their emphatic disapproval of the utter injustice to which His Majesty's Ministers have become party, if they have not actually been the prime perpetrators of it. They are:—

- (1) To resort to violence,
- (2) To advise emigration on a wholesale scale,
- (3) Not to be party to the injustice by ceasing to co-operate with the Government.

Your Excellency must be aware that there was a time when the boldest, though the most thoughtless among the Mussulmans favoured violence, and the "Hijrat" (emigration) has not yet ceased to be the battle-cry. I

venture to claim that I have succeeded by patient reasoning in weaning the party of violence from its ways. I confess that I did not—I did not attempt to succeed in weaning them from violence on moral grounds, but purely on utilitarian grounds. The result, for the time being at any has, however, been to stop violence. The School of “Hijrat” has received a check, if it has not stopped its activity entirely. I hold that no repression could have prevented a violent eruption, if the people had not had presented to them a form of direct action involving considerable sacrifice and ensuring success if such direct action was largely taken up by the public. Non-co-operation was the only dignified and constitutional form of such direct action. For it is the right recognised from times immemorial of the subject to refuse to assist a ruler who misrules.

At the same time I admit that non-co-operation practised by the mass of people is attended with grave risks. But, in a crisis such as has overtaken the Mussalmans of India, no step that is unattended with large risks, can possibly bring about the desired change. Not to run some risks now will be to court much greater risks if not virtual destruction of Law and Order.

But there is yet an escape from non-co-operation. The Mussalman representation has requested your Excellency to lead the agitation yourself, as did your distinguished predecessor at the time of the South African trouble. But if you cannot see your way to do so, and non-co-operation becomes a dire necessity, I hope that your Excellency will give those who have accepted my advice and myself the credit for being actuated by nothing less than a stern sense of duty.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Excellency's faithful servant, (Sd.) M.K. GANDHI. Laburnam Road, Gamdevi, Bombay 22nd June, 1920

THE PREMIER'S REPLY

The English mail has brought us a full and official report of the Premier's speech which he recently made when he received the Khilafat deputation. Mr. Lloyd George's speech is more definite and therefore more disappointing than H.E. the Viceroy's reply to the deputation here. He draws quite unwarranted deductions from the same high principles on which he had based his own pledge only two years ago. He declares that Turkey must pay the penalty of defeat. This determination to punish Turkey does not become one whose immediate predecessor had, in order to appease Muslim soldiers, promised that the British Government had no designs on Turkey and that His Majesty's Government would never think of punishing the Sultan for the misdeeds of the Turkish Committee.

Mr. Lloyd George has expressed his belief that the majority of the population of Turkey did not really want to quarrel with Great Britain and that their rulers misled the country. In spite of this conviction and in spite of Mr. Asquith's promise, he is out to punish Turkey and punish it in the name of justice.

He expounds the principle of self-determination and justifies the scheme of depriving Turkey of its territories one after another. While justifying this scheme he does not exclude even Thrace and this strikes the reader most, because this very Thrace he had mentioned in his pledge as predominantly Turkish. Now we are told by him that both the Turkish census and the Greek census agree in pointing out the Mussalman population in Thrace is in a considerable minority! Mr. Yakub Hussain speaking at the Madras Khilafat conference has challenged the truth of this statement. The Prime Minister cites among others also the example of Smyrna where, he says, we had a most careful investigation by a very impartial committee in the whole of the question of Smyrna and it was found that considerable majority was non-Turkish.' Who will believe the one-sided "impartial committee's" investigations until it is disproved that thousands of Mussalman have been murdered and hundreds of thousands have been driven away from their hearths and homes? Strangely enough Mr. Lloyd George, believes in the necessity of fresh investigations by a purposely appointed committee in Smyrna as the most authenticated and up-to-date report, whereas he would not accept Mr. Mahomed Ali's proposal for an impartial commission in regard to Armenian massacre! Doubtful and one-sided facts and figures suffice for him even to conclude that the Turkish Government is incapable of protecting its subjects. And he proceeds to suggest foreign interference in ruling over Asia Minor in the interests of civilization. Here he cuts at the root of the Sultan's independence. This proposal of appropriating supervision is distinctly unlike the treatment meted out to other enemy powers.

This detraction of the Sultan's suzerainty is only a corollary of the Premier's indifference towards the Muslim idea of the Caliphate. The premier's injustice in treating the Turkish question becomes graver when he thus lightly handles the Khilafat question. There had been occasions when the British have used to their advantage the Muslim idea of associating the Caliph's spiritual power with temporal power. Now this very association is treated as a controversial question by the great statesman.

Will this raise the reputation of Great Britain or stain it? Can this be tolerated by those who fought against Turkey with full faith in British

honesty? Mere receipts of gratitude cannot console the wounded Mussalmans. There lies the alternative for England to choose between two mandates—a mandate over some Turkish territories which is sure to lead to chaos all over the world and a mandate over the hearts of the Mahomedans which will redeem the pledged honour of Britain. The prime minister has an unwise choice. This narrow view registers the latest temperature of British diplomacy.

THE MUSSALMAN REPRESENTATION

Slowly but surely the Mussalman are preparing for the battle before them. They have to fight against odds that are undoubtedly heavy but not half as heavy as the prophet had against him. How often did he not put his life in danger? But his faith in God was unquenchable. He went forward with a light heart, for God was on his side, for he represented truth. If his followers have half the prophet's faith and half his spirit of sacrifice, the odds will be presently even and will in little while turn against the despoilers of Turkey. Already the rapacity of the Allies is telling against themselves. France finds her task difficult. Greece cannot stomach her ill-gotten gains. And England finds Mesopotamia a tough job. The oil of Mosul may feed the fire she has so wantonly lighted and burn her fingers badly. The newspapers say the Arabs do not like the presence of the Indian soldiery in their midst. I do not wonder. They are a fierce and a brave people and do not understand why Indian soldiers should find themselves in Mesopotamia. Whatever the fate of non-co-operation, I wish that not a single Indian will offer his services for Mesopotamia whether for the civil or the military department. We must learn to think for ourselves and before entering upon any employment find out whether thereby we may not make ourselves instruments of injustice. Apart from the question of Khilafat and from the point of abstract justice the English have no right to hold Mesopotamia. It is no part of our loyalty to help the Imperial Government in what is in plain language daylight robbery. If therefore we seek civil or military employment in Mesopotamia we do so for the sake of earning a livelihood. It is our duty to see that the source is not tainted.

It surprises me to find so many people shirking over the mention of non-co-operation. There is no instrument so clean, so harmless and yet so effective as non-co-operation. Judiciously hauled it need not produce any evil consequences. And its intensity will depend purely on the capacity of the people for sacrifice.

The chief thing is to prepare the atmosphere of non-co-operation. "We are not going to co-operate with you in your injustice," is surely the right and the duty of every intelligent subject to say. Were it not for our utter servility, helplessness and want of confidence in ourselves, we would certainly grasp this clean weapon and make the most effective use of it. Even the most despotic government cannot stand except for the consent of the governed which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic force his power is gone. But the British government is never and nowhere entirely or laid upon force. It does make an honest attempt to secure the goodwill of the governed. But it does not hesitate to adopt unscrupulous means to compel the consent of the governed. It has not gone beyond the 'Honesty is the best policy' idea. It therefore bribes you into consenting its will by awarding titles, medals and ribbons, by giving you employment, by its superior financial ability to open for its employees avenues for enriching themselves and finally when these fail, it resorts to force. That is what Sir Michael O'Dwyer did and that is almost every British administrator will certainly do if he thought it necessary. If then we would not be greedy, if we would not run after titles and medals and honorary posts which do the country no good, half the battle is won.

My advisers are never tired of telling me that even if the Turkish peace terms are revised, it will not be due to non-co-operation. I venture to suggest to them that non-co-operation has a higher purpose than mere revision of the terms. If I cannot compel revision I must at least cease to support a government that becomes party to the usurpation. And if I succeed in pushing non-co-operation to the extreme limit, I do compel the Government to choose between India and the usurpation. I have faith enough in England to know that at that moment England will expel her present jaded ministers and put in others who will make a clean sweep of the terms in consultation with an awakened India, draft terms that will be honourable to her, to Turkey and acceptable to India. But I hear my critics say "India has not the strength of purpose and the capacity for the sacrifice to achieve such a noble end. They are partly right. India has not these qualities now, because we have not—shall we not evolve them and infect the nation with them? Is not the attempt worth making? Is my sacrifice too great to gain such a great purpose?"

CRITICISM OF THE MUSLIM MANIFESTO

The Khilafat representation addressed to the Viceroy and my letter on the same subject have been severely criticised by the Anglo-Indian

press. *The Times of India* which generally adopts an impartial attitude has taken strong exception to certain statements made in the Muslim manifesto and has devoted a paragraph of its article to an advance criticism of my suggestion that His Excellency should resign if the peace terms are not revised.

The Times of India excepts to the submission that the British Empire may not treat Turkey like a departed enemy. The signatories have, I think, supplied the best of reasons. They say "We respectfully submit that in the treatment of Turkey the British Government are bound to respect Indian Muslim sentiment in so far as it is neither unjust nor unreasonable." If the seven crore Mussalmans are partners in the Empire, I submit that their wish must be held to be all sufficient for refraining from punishing Turkey. It is beside the point to quote what Turkey did during the war. It has suffered for it. *The Times* inquires wherein Turkey has been treated worse than the other Powers. I thought that the fact was self-evident. Neither Germany nor Austria and Hungary has been treated in the same way that Turkey has been. The whole of the Empire has been reduced to the retention of a portion of its capital, as it were, to mock the Sultan and that too has been done under terms so humiliating that no self-respecting person much less a reigning sovereign can possibly accept.

The Times has endeavoured to make capital out of the fact that the representation does not examine the reason for Turkey not joining the Allies. Well there was no mystery about it. The fact of Russia being one of the Allies was enough to warn Turkey against joining them. With Russia knocking at the gate at the time of the war it was not an easy matter for Turkey to join the Allies. But Turkey had cause to suspect Great Britain herself. She knew that England had done no friendly turn to her during the Bulgarian War. She was hardly well served at the time of the war with Italy. It was still no doubt a bad choice. With the Musssalmans of India awakened and ready to support her, her statesmen might have relied upon Britain not being allowed to damage Turkey if she had remained with the Allies. But this is all wisdom after event. Turkey made a bad choice and she was punished for it. To humiliate her now is to ignore the Indian Mussalman sentiment. Britain may not do it and retain the loyalty of the awakened Mussalmans of India.

For "The Times" to say that the peace terms strictly follow the principle of self-determination is to throw dust in the eyes of its readers. Is it the principle of self-determination that has caused the cessation of Adrianople and Thrace to Greece? By what principle of self-determination has Smyrna been handed to Greece? Have the inhabitants of Thrace and Smyrna asked for Grecian tutelege?

I decline to believe that the Arabs like the disposition that has been made of them. Who is the King of Hedjaj and who is Emir Feisul? Have the Arabs elected these kings and chiefs? Do the Arabs like the Mandate being taken by England? By the time the whole thing is finished, the very name self-determination will stink in one's nostrils. Already signs are not wanting to show that the Arabs, the Thracians and the Smyrnans are resenting their disposal. They may not like Turkish rule but they like the present arrangement less. They could have made their own honourable terms with Turkey but these self-determining people will now be held down by the 'matchless might' of the allied *i.e.*, British forces. Britain had the straight course open to her of keeping the Turkish Empire intact and taking sufficient guarantees for good government. But her Prime Minister chose the crooked course of secret treaties, duplicity and hypocritical subterfuges.

There is still a way out. Let her treat India as a real partner. Let her call the true representatives of the Mussalmans. Let them go to Arabia and the other parts of the Turkish Empire and let her devise a scheme that would not humiliate Turkey, that would satisfy the just Muslim sentiment and that will secure honest self-determination for the races composing that Empire. If it was Canada, Australia or South Africa that had to be placated, Mr. Lloyd George would not have dared to ignore them. They have the power to secede. India has not. Let him no more insult India by calling her a partner, if her feelings count for naught. I invite *The Times of India* to reconsider its position and join an honourable agitation in which a high-souled people are seeking nothing but justice.

I do with all deference still suggest that the least that Lord Chelmsford can do is to resign if the sacred feelings of India's sons are not to be consulted and respected by the Ministers. *The Times* is over-taxing the constitution when it suggests that as a constitutional Viceroy it is not open to Lord Chelmsford to go against the decision of his Majesty's Ministers. It is certainly not open to a Viceroy to retain office and oppose ministerial decisions. But the constitution does allow a Viceroy to resign his high office when he is called upon to carry out decisions that are immoral as the peace terms are or like these terms are calculated to stir to their very depth the feelings of those whose affair he is administering for the time being.

THE MAHOMEDAN DECISION

The Khilafat meeting at Allahabad has unanimously reaffirmed the principle of non-co-operation and appointed an executive committee to

lay down and enforce a detailed programme. This meeting was preceded by a joint Hindu-Mahomedan meeting at which Hindu leaders were invited to give their views. Mrs. Beasant, the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji, the Hon'ble Dr. Sapru Motilal Nehru Chintamani and others were present at the meeting. It was a wise step on the part of the Khilafat Committee to invite Hindus representing all shades of thought to give them the benefit of their advice. Mrs. Besant and Dr. Sapru strongly dissuaded the Mahomedans present from the policy of non-co-operation. The other Hindu speakers made non-committal speeches. Whilst the other Hindu speakers approved of the principle of non-co-operation in theory, they saw many practical difficulties and they feared also complications arising from Mahomedans welcoming an Afghan invasion of India. The Mahomedan speakers gave the fullest and frankest assurances that they would fight to a man any invader who wanted to conquer India, but were equally frank in asserting that any invasion from without undertaken with a view to uphold the prestige of Islam and to vindicate justice would have their full sympathy if not their actual support. It is easy enough to understand and justify the Hindu caution. It is difficult to resist Mahomedan position. In my opinion, the best way to prevent India from becoming the battle ground between the forces of Islam and those of the English is for Hindus to make non-co-operation a complete and immediate success, and I have little doubt that if the Mahomedans remain true to their declared intention and are able to exercise self-restraint, and make sacrifices the Hindus will "play the game" and join them in the campaign of non-co-operation. I feel equally certain that the Hindus will not assist Mahomedans in promoting or bringing about an armed conflict between the British Government and their allies, and Afghanistan. British forces are too well organised to admit of any successful invasion of the Indian frontier. The only way, therefore, the Mahomedans can carry on an effective struggle on behalf of the honour of Islam is to take up non-co-operation in real earnest. It will not only be completely effective if it is adopted by the people on an extensive scale, but it will also provide full scope for individual conscience. If I cannot bear an injustice done by an individual or a corporation, and if I am directly or indirectly instrumental in upholding that individual or corporation, I must answer for it before my Maker, but I have done all it is humanly possible for me to do consistently with the moral code that refuses to injure even the wrongdoer, if I cease to support the injustice in the manner described above. In applying therefore such a great force there should be no haste, there should be no temper shown. Non-co-operation must be and remain absolutely a

voluntary effort. The whole thing then depends upon Mahomedans themselves. If they will but help themselves, Hindu help will come and the Government, great and mighty though it is, will have to bend before this irresistible force. No Government can possibly withstand the bloodless opposition of a whole nation.

MR. ANDREWS' DIFFICULTY

Mr. Andrews whose love for India is equalled only by his love for England and whose mission in life is to serve God, i.e., humanity through India, has contributed remarkable articles to the 'Bombay Chronicle' on the Khilafat movement. He has not spared England, France or Italy. He has shown how Turkey has been most unjustly dealt with and how the Prime Minister's pledge has been broken. He has devoted the last article to an examination of Mr. Mahomed Ali's letter to the Sultan and has come to the conclusion that Mr. Mahomed Ali's statement of claim is at variance with the claim set forth in the latest Khilafat representation to the Viceroy which he wholly approves.

Mr. Andrews and I have discussed the question as fully as it was possible. He asked me publicly to define my own position more fully than I have done. His sole object in inviting discussion is to give strength to a cause which he holds as intrinsically just, and to gather round it the best opinion of Europe so that the allied powers and especially England may for very shame be obliged to revise the terms.

I gladly respond to Mr. Andrew's invitation. I should clear the ground by stating that I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality. I tolerate unreasonable religious sentiment when it is not immoral. I hold the Khilafat claim to be both just and reasonable and therefore it derives greater force because it has behind it the religious sentiment of the Mussalman world.

In my opinion Mr. Mahomed Ali's statement is unexceptionable. It is no doubt clothed in diplomatic language. But I am not prepared to quarrel with the language so long as it is sound in substance.

Mr. Andrews considers that Mr. Mahomed Ali's language goes to show that he would resist Armenian independence against the Armenians and the Arabian against the Arabs. I attach no such meaning to it. What he, the whole of Mussalmans and therefore I think also the Hindus resist is the shameless attempt of England and the other Powers under cover of self-determination to emasculate and dismember Turkey. If I understand the spirit of Islam properly, it is essentially republican in the truest sense of the term. Therefore, if Armenia or Arabia desired independence of

Turkey they should have it. In the case of Arabia, complete Arabian independence would mean transference of the Khilafat to an Arab chieftain. Arabia in that sense is a Mussalman trust, not purely Arabian. And the Arabs without ceasing to be Mussalman, could not hold Arabia against Muslim opinion. The Khalifa must be the custodian of the Holy places and therefore also the routes to them. He must be able to defend them against the whole world. And if an Arab chief arose who could better satisfy that test than the Sultan of Turkey, I have no doubt that he would be recognised as the Khalifa.

I have thus discussed the question academically. The fact is that neither the Mussalmans nor the Hindus believe in the English Ministerial word. They do not believe that the Arabs or the Armenians want complete independence of Turkey. That they want self-government is beyond doubt. Nobody disputes that claim. But nobody has ever ascertained that either the Arabs or the Armenians desire to do away with all connection, even nominal, with Turkey.

The solution of the question lies not in our academic discussion of the ideal position, it lies in an honest appointment of a mixed commission of absolutely independent Indian Mussalmans and Hindus and independent Europeans to investigate the real wish of the Armenians and the Arabs and then to come to a *modus vivendi* where by the claims of the nationality and those of Islam may be adjusted and satisfied.

It is common knowledge that Smyrna and Thrace including Adrianople have been dishonestly taken away from Turkey and that mandates have been unscrupulously established in Syria and Mesopotamia and a British nominee has been set up in Hedjaj under the protection of British guns. This is a position that is intolerable and unjust. Apart therefore from the questions of Armenia and Arabia, the dishonesty and hypocrisy that pollute the peace terms require to be instantaneously removed. It paves the way to an equitable solution of the question of Armenian and Arabian independence which in theory no one denies and which in practice may be easily guaranteed if only the wishes of the people concerned could with any degree of certainty be ascertained.

THE KHILAFAT AGITATION

A friend who has been listening to my speeches once asked me whether I did not come under the sedition section of the Indian Penal Code. Though I had not fully considered it, I told him that very probably I did and that I could not plead 'not guilty' if I was charged under it. For I must admit that I can pretend to no 'affection' for the present Government.

And my speeches are intended to create 'dis-affection' such that the people might consider it a shame to assist or co-operate with a Government that had forfeited all title to confidence, respect or support.

I draw no distinction between the Imperial and the Indian Government. The latter has accepted, on the Khilafat, the policy imposed upon it by the former. And in the Punjab case the former has endorsed the policy of terrorism and emasculation of a brave people initiated by the latter. British ministers have broken their pledged word and wantonly wounded the feelings of the seventy million Mussalmans of India. Innocent men and women were insulted by the insolent officers of the Punjab Government. Their wrongs not only remain unrighted but the very officers who so cruelly subjected them to barbarous humiliation retain office under the Government.

When at Amritsar last year I pleaded with all the earnestness I could command for co-operation with the Government and for response to the wishes expressed in the Royal Proclamation. I did so because I honestly believed that, a new era was about to begin, and that the old spirit of fear, distrust and consequent terrorism was about to give place to the new spirit of respect, trust and goodwill. I sincerely believed that the Mussulman sentiment would be placated and that the officers that had misbehaved during the Martial Law regime in the Punjab would be at least dismissed and the people would be otherwise made to feel that a Government that had always been found quick (and mighty) to punish popular excesses would not fail to punish its agents' misdeeds. But to my amazement and dismay I have discovered that the present representatives of the Empire have become dishonest and unscrupulous. They have no real regard for the wishes of the people of India and they count Indian honour as of little consequence.

I can no longer retain affection for a Government so evilly manned as it is now-a-days. And for me, it is humiliating to retain my freedom and be witness to the continuing wrong. Mr. Montagu however is certainly right in threatening me with deprivation of my liberty if I persist in endangering the existence of the Government. For that must be the result if my activity bears fruit. My only regret is that inasmuch as Mr. Montagu admits my past services, he might have perceived that there must be something exceptionally bad in the Government if a well-wisher like me could no longer give his affection to it. It was simpler to insist on justice being done to the Mussalmans and to the Punjab than to threaten me with punishment so that the injustice might be perpetuated. Indeed I fully expect it will be found that even in promoting disaffection towards an unjust

Government I had rendered greater services to the Empire than I am already credited with.

At the present moment, however, the duty of those who approve my activity is clear. They ought on no account to resent the deprivation of my liberty, should the Government of India deem it to be their duty to take it away. A citizen has no right to resist such restriction imposed in accordance with the laws of the State to which he belongs. Much less have those who sympathise with him. In my case there can be no question of sympathy. For I deliberately oppose the Government to the extent of trying to put its very existence in jeopardy. For my supporters, therefore, it must be a moment of joy when I am imprisoned. It means the beginning of success if only the supporters continue the policy for which I stand. If the Government arrest me, they would do so in order to stop the progress of Non-co-operation which I preach. It follows that if Non-co-operation continues with unabated vigour, even after my arrest, the Government must imprison others or grant the people's wish in order to gain their co-operation. Any eruption of violence on the part of the people even under provocation would end in disaster. Whether therefore it is I or any one else who is arrested during the campaign, the first condition of success is that there must be no resentment shown against it. We cannot imperil the very existence of a Government and quarrel with its attempt to save itself by punishing those who place it in danger.

HIJARAT AND ITS MEANING

India is a continent. Its articulate thousands know what its inarticulate millions are doing or thinking. The Government and the educated Indians may think that the Khilafat movement is merely a passing phase. The millions of Mussalmans think otherwise. The flight of the Mussalmans is growing apace. The newspapers contain paragraphs in out of the way corners informing the readers that a special train containing a barrister with sixty women, forty children including twenty sucklings, all told 765, have left for Afghanistan. They were cheered *en route*. They were presented with cash, edibles and other things, and were joined by more Muhajarins on the way. No fanatical preaching by Shaukatali can make people break up and leave their homes for an unknown land. There must be an abiding faith in them. That it is better for them to leave a State which has no regard for their religious sentiment and face a beggar's life than to remain in it even though it may be in a princely manner. Nothing but pride of power can blind the Government of India to the scene that is being enacted before it.

But there is yet another side to the movement. Here are the facts as stated in the following Government *Communique* dated 10th July, 1920:—

An unfortunate affair in connection with the Mahajarin occurred on the 8th instant at Kacha Garhi between Peshawar and Jamrud. The following are the facts as at present reported. Two members of a party of the Mahajarins proceeding by train to Jamrud were detected by the British military police travelling without tickets. Altercation ensued at Islamia College Station, but the train proceeded to Kacha Garhi. An attempt was made to evict these Mahajarins, whereupon the military police were attacked by a crowd of some forty Mahajarins and the British officer who intervened was seriously wounded with a spade. A detachment of Indian troops at Kacha Garhi thereupon fired two or three shots at the Mahajarin for making murderous assault on the British officer. One Mahajarin was killed and one wounded and three arrested. Both the military and the police were injured. The body of the Mahajarin was despatched to Peshawar and buried on the morning of the 9th. This incident has caused considerable excitement in Peshawar City, and the Khilafat Hijrat Committee are exercising restraining influence. Shops were closed on the morning of the 9th. A full enquiry has been instituted.

Now Peshawar to Jamrud is a matter of a few miles. It was clearly the duty of the military not to attempt to pull out the ticketless Mahajarins for the sake of a few annas. But they actually attempted force. Intervention by the rest of the party was a foregone conclusion. An altercation ensued. A British officer was attacked with a spade. Firing and a death of a Mahajarin was the result. Has British prestige been enhanced by the episode? Why have not the Government put tactful officers in charge at the frontier, whilst a great religious emigration is in progress? The action of the military will pass from tongue to tongue throughout India and the Mussalman world around, will not doubt be unconsciously and even consciously exaggerated in the passage and the feeling bitter as it already is will grow in bitterness. The *Communique* says that the Government are making further inquiry. Let us hope that it will be full and that better arrangements will be made to prevent a repetition of what appears to have been a thoughtless act on the part of the military.

And may I draw the attention of those who are opposing non-co-operation that unless they find out a substitute they should either join the non-co-operation movement or prepare to face a disorganised subterranean upheaval whose effect no one can foresee and whose spread it would be impossible to check or regulate?

3. THE PUNJAB WRONGS

POLITICAL FREEMASONRY

Freemasonry is a secret brotherhood which has more by its secret and iron rules than by its service to humanity obtained a hold upon some of the best minds. Similarly there seems to be some secret code of conduct governing the official class in India before which the flower of the great British nation fall prostrate and unconsciously become instruments of injustice which as private individuals they would be ashamed of perpetrating. In no other way is it possible for one to understand the majority report of the Hunter Committee, the despatch of the Government of India, and the reply thereto of the Secretary of State for India. In spite of the energetic protests of a section of the Press to the personnel of the committee, it might be said that on the whole the public were prepared to trust it especially as it contained three Indian members who could fairly be claimed to be independent. The first rude shock to this confidence was delivered by the refusal of Lord Hunter's Committee to accept the very moderate and reasonable demand of the Congress Committee that the imprisoned Punjab leaders might be allowed to appear before it to instruct Counsel. Any doubt that might have been left in the mind of any person has been dispelled by the report of the majority of that committee. The result has justified the attitude of the Congress Committee. The evidence collected by it shows what Lord Hunter's Committee purposely denied itself.

The minority report stands out like an oasis in a desert. The Indian members deserve the congratulation of their countrymen for having dared to do their duty in the face of heavy odds. I wish that they had refused to associate themselves even in a modified manner with the condemnation of the civil disobedience form of Satyagraha. The defiant spirit of the Delhi mob on the 30th March, 1919 can hardly be used for condemning a great spiritual movement which is admittedly and manifestly intended to restrain the violent tendencies of mobs and to replace criminal lawlessness by civil disobedience of authority, when it has forfeited all title to respect. On the 30th March civil disobedience had not even been started. Almost every great popular demonstration has been hitherto attended all the world over by a certain amount of lawlessness. The demonstration of 30th March and 6th April could have been held under any other aegis as under that of Satyagrah. I hold that without the advent of the spirit of civility and orderliness the disobedience would have taken a much more violent form than it did even at Delhi. It was only the wonderfully quick acceptance

by the people of the principle of Satyagrah that effectively checked the spread of violence throughout the length and breadth of India. And even to-day it is not the memory of the black barbarity of General Dyer that is keeping the undoubted restlessness among the people from breaking forth into violence. The hold that Satyagrah has gained on the people—it may be even against their will—is curbing the forces of disorder and violence. But I must not detain the reader on a defence of Satyagrah against unjust attacks. If it has gained a foothold in India, it will survive much fiercer attacks than the one made by the majority of the Hunter Committee and somewhat supported by the minority. Had the majority report been defective only in this direction and correct in every other there would have been nothing but praise for it. After all Satyagrah is a new experiment in political field. And a hasty attributing to it of any popular disorder would have been pardonable.

The universally pronounced adverse judgment upon the report and the despatches rests upon far more painful revelations. Look at the manifestly laboured defence of every official act of inhumanity except where condemnation could not be avoided through the impudent admissions made by the actors themselves; look at the special pleading introduced to defend General Dyer even against himself; look at the vain glorification of Sir Michael O'Dwyer although it was his spirit that actuated every act of criminality on the part of the subordinates; look at the deliberate refusal to examine his wild career before the events of April. His acts were an open book of which the committee ought to have taken judicial notices. Instead of accepting everything that the officials had to say, the Committee's obvious duty was to tax itself to find out the real cause of the disorders. It ought to have gone out of its way to search out the inwardness of the events. Instead of patiently going behind the hard crust of official documents, the Committee allowed itself to be guided with criminal laziness by mere official evidence. The report and the despatches, in my humble opinion, constitute an attempt to condone official lawlessness. The cautious and half-hearted condemnation pronounced upon General Dyer's massacre and the notorious crawling order only deepens the disappointment of the reader as he goes through page after page of thinly disguised official whitewash. I need, however, scarcely attempt any elaborate examination of the report or the despatches which have been so justly censured by the whole national press whether of the moderate or the extremist hue. The point to consider is how to break down this secret—be the secrecy over so unconscious—conspiracy to uphold official iniquity. A scandal of this magnitude cannot be tolerated

by the nation, if it is to preserve its self-respect and become a free partner in the Empire. The All-India Congress Committee has resolved upon convening a special session of the Congress for the purpose of considering, among other things, the situation arising from the report. In my opinion the time has arrived when we must cease to rely upon mere petition to Parliament for effective action. Petitions will have value, when the nation has behind it the power to enforce its will. What power then have we? When we are firmly of opinion that grave wrong has been done to us and when after an appeal to the highest authority we fail to secure redress, there must be some power available to us for undoing the wrong. It is true that in the vast majority of cases it is the duty of a subject to submit to wrongs on failure of the usual procedure, so long as they do not affect his vital being. But every nation and every individual has the right and it is their duty, to rise against an intolerable wrong. I do not believe in armed risings. They are a remedy worse than the disease sought to be cured. They are a token of the spirit of revenge and impatience and anger. The method of violence cannot do good in the long run. Witness the effect of the armed rising of the allied powers against Germany. Have they not become even like the Germans, as the latter have been depicted to us by them?

We have a better method. Unlike that of violence it certainly involves the exercise of restraint and patience: but it requires also resoluteness of will. This method is to refuse to be party to the wrong. No tyrant has ever yet succeeded in his purpose without carrying the victim with him, it may be, as it often is, by force. Most people choose rather to yield to the will of the tyrant than to suffer for the consequences of resistance. Hence does terrorism form part of the stock-in-trade of the tyrant. But we have instances in history where terrorism has failed to impose the terrorist's will upon his victim. India has the choice before her now. If then the acts of the Punjab Government be an insufferable wrong, if the report of Lord Hunter's Committee and the two despatches be a greater wrong by reason of their grievous condonation of those acts, it is clear that we must refuse to submit to this official violence. Appeal the Parliament by all means, if necessary, but if the Parliament fails us and if we are worthy to call ourselves a nation, we must refuse to uphold the Government by withdrawing co-operation from it.

THE DUTY OF THE PUNJABEE

The Allahabad *Leader* deserves to be congratulated for publishing the correspondence on Mr. Bosworth Smith who was one of the Martial Law officers against whom the complaints about persistent and continuous

ill-treatment were among the bitterest. It appears from the correspondence that Mr. Bosworth Smith has received promotion instead of dismissal. Sometime before Martial Law Mr. Smith appears to have been degraded. "He has since been restored," says the *Leader* correspondent, "to his position of a Deputy Commissioner of the second grade from which he was degraded and also been invested with power under section 30 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Since his arrival, the poor Indian population of the town of Ambala Cantonment has been living under a regime of horror and tyranny." The correspondent adds: "I use both these words deliberately for conveying precisely what they mean." I cull a few passage from this illuminating letter to illustrate the meaning of horror and tyranny. "In private complaints he never takes the statement of the complainant. It is taken down by the reader when the court rises and got signed by the magistrate the following day. Whether the report received (upon such complaints) is favourable to the complainant or unfavourable to him, it is never ready by the magistrate, and complaints are dismissed without proper trial. This is the fate of private complaints. Now as regards police chellans. Pleaders for the accused are not allowed to interview under trial prisoners in police custody. They are not allowed to cross-examine prosecution witnesses.... Prosecution witnesses are examined with leading questions.... Thus a whole prosecution story is put into the mouth of police, witnesses for the defence though called in are not allowed to be examined by the defence counsel.... The accused is silenced if he picks up courage to say anything in defence.... Any Cantonment servant can write down the name of any citizen of the Cantonment on a chit of paper and ask him to appear the next day in court. This is a summons.... If any one does not appear in court who is thus ordered, criminal warrants of arrest are issued against him." There is much more of this style in the letter which is worth producing, but I have given enough to illustrate the writer's meaning. Let me turn for a while to this official's record during Martial Law. He is the official who tried people in batches and convicted them after a farcical trial. Witnesses have deposed to his having assembled people, having asked them to give false evidence, having removed women's veils, called them 'flies, bitches, she-asses' and having spat upon them. He, it was who subjected the innocent pleaders of Shokhupura indescribable persecution. Mr. Andrews personally investigated complaints against this official and came to the conclusion that no official had behaved worse than Mr. Smith. He gathered the people of Shokhupura, humiliated them in a variety of ways, called them 'suvarlog,' 'gandi mukghi.' His evidence before the Hunter Commission betrays his total disregard for truth and this is the officer who, if the correspondent in question has given correct

facts, has been promoted. The question however is why, he is at all in Government service and why he has not been tried for assaulting and abusing innocent men and women.

I notice a desire for the impeachment of General Dyer and Sir Michael O'Dwyer. I will not stop to examine whether the course is feasible. I was sorry to find Mr. Shastri joining this cry for the prosecution of General Dyer. If the English people will willingly do so, I would welcome such prosecution as a sign of their strong disapproval of the Jallianwalla Bagh atrocity, but I would certainly not spend a single farthing in a vain pursuit after the conviction of this man. Surely the public has received sufficient experience of the English mind. Practically the whole English Press has joined the conspiracy to screen these offenders against humanity. I would not be party to make heroes of them by joining the cry for prosecution private or public. If I can only persuade India to insist upon their complete dismissal, I should be satisfied. But more than the dismissal, of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, is necessary the peremptory dismissal, if not a trial, of Colonel O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Shri Ram and others mentioned in the Congress Sub-Committee's Report. Bad as General Dyer is I consider Mr. Smith to be infinitely worse and his crimes to be far more serious than the massacre of Jallianwalla Bugh. General Dyer sincerely believed that it was a soldierly act to terrorise people by shooting them. But Mr. Smith was wantonly cruel, vulgar and debased. If all the facts that have been deposed to against him are true, there is not a spark of humanity about him. Unlike General Dyer he lacks the courage to confirm what he has done and he wriggles when challenged. This officer remains free to inflict himself upon people who have done no wrong to him, and who is permitted to disgrace the rule he represents for the time being.

What is the Punjab doing? Is it not the duty of the Punjabis not to rest until they have secured the dismissal of Mr. Smith and the like? The Punjab leaders have been discharged in vain if they will not utilise the liberty they have received, in order to purge the administration of Messrs. Bosworth Smith and Company. I am sure that if they will only begin a determined agitation they will have the whole India by their side. I venture to suggest to them that the best way to qualify for sending General Dyer to the gallows is to perform the easier and the more urgent duty of arresting the mischief still continued by the officials against whom they have assisted in collecting overwhelming evidence.

GENERAL DYER

The Army Council has found General Dyer guilty of error of judgment

and advised that he should not receive any office under the Crown. Mr. Montagu has been unsparing in his criticism of General Dyer's conduct. And yet somehow or other I cannot help feeling that General Dyer is by no means the worst offender. His brutality is unmistakable. His abject and unsoldier-like cowardice is apparent in every line of his amazing defence before the Army Council. He has called an unarmed crowd of men and children—mostly holiday-makers—'a rebel army.' He believes himself to be the saviour of the Punjab in that he was able to shoot down like rabbits men who were penned in an inclosure. Such a man is unworthy of being considered a soldier. There was no bravery in his action. He ran no risk. He shot without the slightest opposition and without warning. This is not an 'error of judgement.' It is paralysis of it in the face of fancied danger. It is proof of criminal incapacity and heartlessness. But the fury that has been spent upon General Dyer is, I am sure, largely misdirected. No doubt the shooting was 'frightful,' the loss of innocent life deplorable. But the slow torture, degradation and emasculation that followed was much worse, more calculated, malicious and soul-killing, and the actors who performed the deeds deserve greater condemnation than General Dyer for the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. The latter merely destroyed a few bodies but the others tried to kill the soul of a nation. Who ever talks of Col. Frank Johnson who was by far the worst offender? He terrorised guiltless Lahore, and by his merciless orders set the tone to the whole of the Martial Law officers. But what I am concerned with is not even Col. Johnson. The first business of the people of the Punjab and of India is to rid the service of Col O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Shri Ram and Mr. Malik Khan. They are still retained in the service. Their guilt is as much proved as that of General Dyer. We shall have failed in our duty if the condemnation pronounced upon General Dyer produces a sense of satisfaction and the obvious duty of purging the administration in the Punjab is neglected. That task will not be performed by platform rhetoric or resolutions merely. Stern action is required on our part if we are to make any headway with ourselves and make any impression upon the officials that they are not to consider themselves as masters of the people but as their trustees and servants who cannot hold office if they misbehave themselves and prove unworthy of the trust reposed in them.

THE PUNJAB SENTENCES

The commissioners appointed by the Congress Punjab Sub Committee have in their report accused His Excellency the Viceroy of

criminal want of imagination. His Excellency's refusal to commute two death sentences out of five is a fine illustration of the accusation. The rejection of the appeal by the Privy Council no more proves the guilt of the condemned than their innocence would have been proved by quashing the proceedings before the Martial Law Tribunal. Moreover, these cases clearly come under the Royal Proclamation in accordance with its interpretation by the Punjab Government. The murders in Amritsar were not due to any private quarrel between the murderers and their victims. The offence grave, though it was, was purely political and committed under excitement. More than full reparation has been taken for the murders and arson. In the circumstances commonsense dictates reduction of the death sentences. The popular belief favours the view that the condemned men are innocent and have not had a fair trial. The execution has been so long delayed that hanging at this stage would give a rude shock to Indian society. Any Viceroy with imagination would have at once announced commutation of the death sentences—not so Lord Chelmsford. In his estimation, evidently, the demands of justice will not be satisfied if at least some of the condemned men are not hanged. Public feeling with him counts for nothing. We shall still hope that, either the Viceroy or Mr. Montagu will commute the death sentences.

But if the Government will grievously err, if they carry out the sentences, the people will equally err if they give way to anger or grief over the hanging if it has unfortunately to take place. Before we become a nation possessing an effective voice in the councils of nations, we must be prepared to contemplate with equanimity, not a thousand murders of innocent men and women but many thousands before we attain a status in the world that, shall not be surpassed by any nation. We hope therefore that all concerned will take rather than lose heart and treat hanging as an ordinary affair of life.

[Since the above was in type, we have received cruel news. At last H.E. the Viceroy has mercilessly given the rude shock to Indian society. It is now for the latter to take heart in spite of the unkindest cut.—Ed. Y.I.]

4. SWARAJ

SWARAJ IN ONE YEAR

Much laughter has been indulged in at my expense for having told the Congress audience at Calcutta that if there was sufficient response to

my programme of non-co-operation Swaraj would be attained in one year. Some have ignored my condition and laughed because of the impossibility of getting Swaraj anyhow within one year. Others have spelt the 'if' in capitals and suggested that if 'ifs' were permissible in argument, any absurdity could be proved to be a possibility. My proposition however is based on a mathematical calculation. And I venture to say that true Swaraj is a practical impossibility without due fulfilment of my conditions. Swaraj means a state such that we can maintain our separate existence without the presence of the English. If it is to be a partnership, it must be partnership at will. There can be no Swaraj without our feeling and being the equals of Englishmen. To-day we feel that we are dependent upon them for our internal and external security, for an armed peace between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, for our education and for the supply of daily wants, nay, even for the settlement of our religious squabbles. The Rajahs are dependent upon the British for their powers and the millionaires for their millions. The British know our helplessness and Sir Thomas Holland cracks jokes quite legitimately at the expense of non-co-operationists. To get Swaraj then is to get rid of our helplessness. The problem is no doubt stupendous even as it is for the fabled lion who having been brought up in the company of goats found it impossible to feel that he was a lion. As Tolstoy used to put it, mankind often laboured under hypnotism. Under its spell continuously we feel the feeling of helplessness. The British themselves cannot be expected to help us out of it. On the contrary, they din into our ears that we shall be fit to govern ourselves only by slow educative processes. The "Times" suggested that if we boycott the councils we shall lose the opportunity of a training in Swaraj. I have no doubt that there are many who believe what the "Times" says. It even resorts to a falsehood. It audaciously says that Lord Milner's Mission listened to the Egyptians only when they were ready to lift the boycott of the Egyptian Council. For me the only training in Swaraj we need is the ability to defend ourselves against the whole world and to live our natural life in perfect freedom even though it may be full of defects. Good Government is no substitute for self-Government. The Afghans have a bad Government but it is self-Government. I envy them. The Japanese learnt the art through a sea of blood. And if we to-day had the power to drive out the English by superior brute force, we would be counted their superiors, and in spite of our inexperience in debating at the Council table or in holding executive offices, we would be held fit to govern ourselves. For brute force is the only test the west has hitherto recognised. The Germans were defeated not because they were necessarily

in the wrong, but because the allied Powers were found to possess greater brute strength. In the end therefore India must either learn the art of war which the British will not teach her or, she must follow her own way of discipline and self-sacrifice through non-co-operation. It is as amazing as it is humiliating that less than one hundred-thousand white men should be able to rule three hundred and fifteen million Indians. They do so somewhat undoubtedly by force, but more by securing our co-operation in a thousand ways and making us more and more helpless and dependent on them as time goes forward. Let us not mistake reformed councils, more lawcourts and even governorships for real freedom or power. They are but subtler methods of emasculation. The British cannot rule us by mere force. And so they resort to all means, honourable and dishonourable, in order to retain their hold on India. They want India's billions and they want India's man power for their imperialistic greed. If we refuse to supply them with men and money, we achieve our goal, namely, Swaraj, equality, manliness.

The cup of our humiliation was filled during the closing scenes in the Viceregal Council. Mr. Shastri could not move his resolution on the Punjab. The Indian victims of Jallianwala received Rs. 1,250, the English victims of mob-frenzy received lakhs. The officials who were guilty of crimes against those whose servants they were, were reprimanded. And the councillors were satisfied. If India were powerful, India would not have stood this addition of insult, to her injury.

I do not blame the British. If we were weak in numbers as they are, we too would perhaps have resorted to the same methods as they are now employing. Terrorism and deception are weapons not of the strong but of the weak. The British are weak in numbers we are weak in spite of our numbers. The result is that each is dragging the other down. It is common experience that Englishmen lose in character after residence in India and that Indians lose in courage and manliness by contact with Englishmen. This process of weakening is good neither for us, two nations, nor for the world.

But if we Indians take care of ourselves the English and the rest of the world would take care of themselves. Our contributions to the world's progress must therefore consist in setting our own house in order.

Training in arms for the present is out of the question. I go a step further and believe that India has a better mission for the world. It is within her to show that she can achieve her destiny by pure self-sacrifice, i.e., self-purification. This can be done only by non-co-operation. And non-co-operation is possible only when those who commenced to co-

operate being the process of withdrawal. If we can but free ourselves from the threefold *maya* of Government-controlled schools, Government law-courts and legislative councils, and truly control our own education regulate our disputes and be indifferent to their legislation, we are ready to govern ourselves and we are only then ready to ask the government servants, whether civil or military, to resign, and the tax-payers to suspend payment of taxes.

And is it such an impracticable proposition to expect parents to withdraw their children from schools and colleges and establish their own institutions or to ask lawyers to suspend their practice and devote their whole time attention to national service against payment where necessary, of their maintenance, or to ask candidates for councils not to enter councils and lend their passive or active assistance to the legislative machinery through which all control is exercised. The movement of non-co-operation is nothing but an attempt to isolate the brute force of the British from all the trappings under which it is hidden and to show that brute force by itself cannot for one single moment hold India.

But I frankly confess that, until the three conditions mentioned by me are fulfilled, there is no Swaraj. We may not go on taking our college degrees, taking thousands of rupees monthly from clients for cases which can be finished in five minutes and taking the keenest delight in wasting national time on the council floor and still expect to gain national self-respect.

The last though not the least important part of the Maya still remains to be considered. That is Swadeshi. Had we not abandoned Swadeshi, we need not have been in the present fallen state. If we would get rid of the economic slavery, we must manufacture our own cloth and at the present moment only by hand-spinning and hand weaving.

All this means discipline, self-denial, self-sacrifice, organising ability, confidence and courage. If we show this in one year among the classes that to-day count, and make public opinion, we certainly gain Swaraj within one year. If I am told that even we who lead have not these qualities in us, there certainly will never be Swaraj for India, but then we shall have no right to blame the English for what they are doing. Our salvation and its time are solely dependent upon us.

BRITISH RULE—AN EVIL

The *Interpreter* is however more to the point in asking, "Does Mr. Gandhi hold without hesitation or reserve that British rule in India is altogether an evil and that the people of India are to be taught so to regard

it? He must hold it to be so evil that the wrongs it does outweigh the benefit it confers, for only so is non-co-operation to be justified at the bar of conscience or of Christ." My answer is emphatically in the affirmative. So long as I believed that the sum total of the energy of the British Empire was good, I clung to it despite what I used to regard as temporary aberrations. I am not sorry for having done so. But having my eyes opened, it would be sin for me to associate myself with the Empire unless it purges itself of its evil character. I write this with sorrow and I should be pleased if I discovered that I was in error and that my present attitude was a reaction. The continuous financial drain, the emasculation of the Punjab and the betrayal of the Muslim sentiment constitute, in my humble opinion, a threefold robbery of India. 'The blessings of *pax Britanica*' I reckon, therefore, to be a curse. We would have at least remained like the other nations brave men and women, instead of feeling as we do so utterly helpless, if we had no British Rule imposing on us an armed peace. 'The blessing' of roads and railways is a return no self-respecting nation would accept for its degradation. 'The blessing' of education is proving one of the greatest obstacles in our progress towards freedom.

A MOVEMENT OF PURIFICATION

The fact is that non-co-operation by reason of its non-violence has become a religious and purifying movement. It is daily bringing strength to the nation, showing it its weak spots and the remedy for removing them. It is a movement of self-reliance. It is the mightiest force for revolutionising opinion and stimulating thought. It is a movement of self-imposed suffering and therefore possesses automatic checks against extravagance or impatience. The capacity of the nation for suffering regulates its advance towards freedom. It isolates the force of evil by refraining from participation in it, in any shape or form.

WHY WAS INDIA LOST?

[A dialogue between the Reader and Editor,—*Indian Home Rule*].

Reader: You have said much about civilisation—enough to make me ponder over it. I do not know what I should adopt and what I should avoid from the nations of Europe, but one question comes to my lips immediately. If civilisation is a disease, and if it has attacked England why has she been able to take India, and why is she able to retain it?

Editor: Your question is not very difficult to answer, and we shall presently be able to examine the true nature of Swaraj; for I am aware

that I have still to answer that question. I will, however, take up your previous question. The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them. Let us now see whether these positions can be sustained. They came to our country originally for the purpose of trade. Recall the Company Bahadur. Who made it Bahadur? They had not the slightest intention at the time of establishing a kingdom. Who assisted the Company's officers? Who was tempted at the sight of their silver? Who bought their goods? History testifies that we did all this. In order to become rich all at once, we welcomed the Company's officers with open arms. We assisted them. If I am in the habit of drinking Bhang, and a seller thereof sells it to me, am I to blame him or myself? By blaming the seller shall I be able to avoid the habit? And, if a particular retailer is driven away will not another take his place? A true servant of India will have to go to the root of the matter. If an excess of food has caused me indigestion I will certainly not avoid it by blaming water. He is a true physician who probes the cause of disease and, if you pose as a physician for the disease of India, you will have to find out its true cause.

Reader: You are right. Now, I think you will not have to argue much with me to drive your conclusions home. I am impatient to know your further views. We are now on a most interesting topic. I shall, therefore, endeavour to follow your thought, and stop you when I am in doubt.

Editor: I am afraid that, in spite of your enthusiasm, as we proceed further we shall have differences of opinion. Nevertheless, I shall argue only when you will stop me. We have already seen that the English merchants were able to get a footing in India because we encouraged them. When our princes fought among themselves, they sought the assistance of Company Bahadar. That corporation was versed alike in commerce and war. It was unhampered by questions of morality. Its object was to increase its commerce and to make money. It accepted our assistance, and increased the number of its warehouses. To protect the latter it employed an army which was utilised by us also. Is it not then useless to blame the English for what we did at that time? The Hindus and the Mahomedans were at daggers drawn. This, too, gave the Company its opportunity, and thus we created the circumstances that gave the Company its control over India. Hence it is truer to say that we gave India to the English than that India was lost.

Reader: Will you now tell me how they are able to retain India?

Editor: The causes that gave them India enable them to retain it. Some Englishmen state that they took, and they hold, India by the sword.

Both these statements are wrong. The sword is entirely useless for holding India. We alone keep them. Napoleon is said to have described the English as a nation of shop keepers. It is a fitting description. They hold whatever dominions they have for the sake of their commerce. Their army and their navy are intended to protect it. When the Transvaal offered no such attractions, the late Mr. Gladstone discovered that it was no right for the English to hold it. When it became a paying proposition, resistance led to war. Mr. Chamberlain soon discovered that England enjoyed a suzerainty over the Transvaal. It is related that some one asked the late President Kruger whether there was gold in the moon? He replied that it was highly unlikely, because, if there were, the English would have annexed it. Many problems can be solved by remembering that money is their God. Then it follows that we keep the English in India for our base self-interest. We like their commerce, they please us by their subtle methods, and get what they want from us. To blame them for this is to perpetuate their power. We further strengthen their hold by quarrelling amongst ourselves. If you accept the above statements, it is proved that the English entered India for the purposes of trade. They remain in it for the same purpose, and we help them to do so. Their arms and ammunition are perfectly useless. In this connection, I remind you that it is the British flag which is waving in Japan, and not the Japanese. The English have a treaty with Japan for the sake of their commerce and you will see that, if they can manage it, their commerce will greatly expand in that country. They wish to convert the whole world into a vast market for their goods. That they cannot do so is true, but the blame will not be theirs. They will leave no stone unturned to reach the goal.

SWARAJ MY IDEAL

The following is a fairly full report of Mr. Gandhi's important speech at Calcutta on the 13th December, 1920:—

The very fact, that so many of you cannot understand Hindi which is bound to be the National medium of expression throughout Hindustan in gatherings of Indians belonging to different parts of the land, shows the depth of the degradation to which we have sunk, and points to the supreme necessity of the non-co-operation movement which is intended to lift us out of that condition. This Government has been instrumental in degrading this great nation in various ways, and it is impossible to be free from it without co-operation amongst ourselves which is in turn impossible without a national medium of expression.

But I am not here to day to plead for the medium. I am to plead for the acceptance by the country of the programme of non-violent, progressive non-co-operation. Now all the words that I have used here are absolutely necessary and the two adjectives 'progressive' and 'non-violent' are integral part of a whole. With me non-violence is part of my religion, a matter of creed. But with the great number of Mussalmans non-violence is a policy, with thousand, if not millions of Hindus, it is equally a matter of policy. But whether it is a creed or a policy, it is utterly impossible for you to finish the programme for the enfranchisement of the millions of India, without recognising the necessity and the value of non-violence. Violence may for a moment avail to secure a certain measure of success but it could not in the long run achieve any appreciable result. On the other hand all violence would prove destructive to the honour and self-respect of the nation. The blue books issued by the Government of India show that inasmuch as we have used violence, military expenditure has gone up, not proportionately but in geometrical progression. The bonds of our slavery have been forged all the stronger for our having offered violence. And the whole history of British rule in India is a demonstration of the fact that we have never been able to offer successful violence. Whilst therefore I say that rather than have the yoke of a Government that has so emasculated us, I would welcome violence. I would urge with all the emphasis that I can command that India will never be able to regain her own by methods of violence.

Lord Ronaldshay who has done me the honour of reading my booklet on Home Rule has warned my countrymen against engaging themselves in a struggle for a Swaraj such as is described in that booklet. Now though I do not want to withdraw a single word of it, I would say to you on this occasion that I do not ask India to follow out to-day the methods prescribed in my booklet. If they could do that they would have Home Rule not in a year but in a day, and India by realising that ideal wants to acquire an ascendancy over the rest of the world. But it must remain a day dream more or less for the time being. What I am doing to-day is that I am giving the country a pardonable programme not the abolition of law courts, posts, telegraphs and of railways but for the attainment of Parliamentary Swaraj. I am telling you to do that so long as we do not isolate ourselves from this Government, we are co-operating with it through schools, law courts and councils, through service civil and military and payment of taxes and foreign trade.

The moment this fact is realised and non-co-operation is effected, this Government must totter to pieces. If I know that the masses were

prepared for the whole programme at once, I would not delay in putting it at once to work. It is not possible at the present moment, to prevent the masses from bursting out into wrath against those who come to execute the law, it is not possible, that the military would lay down their arms without the slightest violence. If that were possible to-day, I would propose all the stages of non-co-operation to be worked simultaneously. But we have not secured that control over the masses, we have uselessly frittered away precious years of the nation's life in mastering a language which we need least for winning our liberty; we have frittered away all those years in learning liberty from Milton and Shakespeare, in deriving inspiration from the pages of Mill, whilst liberty could be learnt at our doors. We have thus succeeded in isolating ourselves from the masses: we have been westernised. We have failed these 35 years to utilise our education in order to permeate the masses. We have sat upon the pedestal and from there delivered harangues to them in a language they do not understand and we see to-day that we are unable to conduct large gatherings in a disciplined manner. And discipline is the essence of success. Here is therefore one reason why I have introduced the word 'progressive' in the non-co-operation Resolution. Without any impertinence I may say that I understand the mass mind better than any one amongst the educated Indians. I contend that the masses are not ready for suspension of payment of taxes. They have not yet learnt sufficient self-control. If I was sure of non-violence on their part I would ask them to suspend payment to-day and not waste a single moment of the nations time. With me the liberty of India has become a passion. Liberty of Islam is as dear to me. I would not therefore delay a moment if I found that the whole of the programme could be enforced at once.

It grieves me to miss the faces of dear and revered leaders in this assembly. We miss here the trumpet voice of Surendranath Banorji, who has rendered inestimable service to the country. And though we stand as poles asunder to-day, though we may have sharp differences with him, we must express them with becoming restraint. I do not ask you to give up a single iota of principle. I urge non-violence in language and in deed. If non-violence is essential in our dealings with Government, it is more essential in our dealings with our leaders. And it grieves me deeply to hear of recent instances of violence reported to have been used in East Bongal against our own people. I was pained to hear that the ears of a man who had voted at the recent elections had been cut, and night soil had been thrown into the bed of a man who had stood as a candidate. Non-co-operation is never going to succeed in this way. It will not succeed

unless we create an atmosphere of perfect freedom, unless we prize our opponents liberty as much as our own. The liberty of faith, conscience, thought and action which we claim for ourselves must be conceded equally to others. Non co-operation is a process of purification and we must continually try to touch the hearts of those who differ from us, their minds, and their emotions, but never their bodies. Discipline and restraint are the cardinal principles of our conduct and I warn you against any sort of tyrannical social ostracism. I was deeply grieved therefore to hear of the insult offered to a dead body in Delhi and feel that if it was the action of non-co-operators they have disgraced themselves and their creed. I repeat we cannot deliver our land through violence.

It was not a joke when I said on the congress platform that Swaraj could be established in one year if there was sufficient response from the nation. Three months of this year are gone. If we are true to our salt, true to our nation, true to the songs we sing, if we are true to the Bhagwad Gita and the Qur'an, we would finish the programme in the remaining nine months and deliver Islam the Punjab and India.

I have proposed a limited programme workable within one year, having a special regard to the educated classes. We seem to be labouring under the illusion that we cannot possibly live without Councils, law courts and schools provided by the Government. The moment we are disillusioned we have Swaraj. It is demoralising both for Government and the governed that a hundred thousand pilgrims should dictate terms to a nation composed of three hundred millions. And how is it they can thus dictate terms. It is because we have been divided and they have ruled. I have never forgotten Humes' frank confession that the British Government was sustained by the policy of "Divide and Rule." Therefore it is that I have laid stress upon Hindu Muslim Unity as one of the important essentials for the success of Non-co-operation. But, it should be no lip unity, nor bunia unity it should be a unity broad based on a recognition of the heart. If we want to save Hinduism, I say for Gods sake, do not seek to bargain with the Mussalmans. I have been going about with Maulana Shaukat Ali all these months, but I have not so much as whispered anything about the protection of the cow. My alliance with the Ali Brothers is one of honour. I feel that I am on my honour, the whole of Hinduism is on its honour, and if it will not be found wanting, it will do its duty towards the Mussalmans of India. Any bargaining would be degrading to us. Light brings light not darkness, and nobility done with a noble purpose will be twice rewarded. It will be God alone who can protect the cow. Ask me not to-day 'what about the cow,' ask me after Islam is vindicated through

India. Ask the Rajas what they do to entertain their English guests. Do they not provide beef and champagne for their guests. Persuade them first to stop cow killing and then think of bargaining with Mussalmans. And how are we Hindus behaving ourselves towards the cow and her progeny! Do we treat her as our religion requires us? Not till we have set our own house in order and saved the cow from the Englishmen have we the right to plead on her behalf with the Mussalmans. And the best way of saving the cow from them is to give them unconditional help in their hour of trouble.

Similarly what do we owe to Punjab? The whole of India was made to crawl on her belly in as much as a single Punjabi was made to crawl in that dirty lane in Amritsar, the whole womanhood of India was unveiled in as much as the innocent woman of Manianwalla were unveiled by an insolent office; and Indian childhood was dishonoured in that, that school children of tender age were made to walk four times a day to stated places within the martial area in the Punjab and to salute the Union Jack, through the effect of which order two children, seven years old died of sunstroke having been made to wait in the noonday sun. In my opinion it is a sin to attend the schools and colleges conducted under the aegis of this Government so long as it has not purged itself of these crimes by proper repentance. We may not with any sense of self-respect plead before the courts of the Government when we remember that it was through the Punjab Courts that innocent men were sentenced to be imprisoned and hanged. We become participators in the crime of the Government by voluntarily helping it or being helped by it.

The women of India have intuitively understood the spiritual nature of the struggle. Thousands have attended to listen to the message of non-violent non-co-operation and have given me their precious ornaments for the purpose of advancing the cause of Swaraj. Is it any wonder if I believe the possibility of gaining Swaraj within a year after all these wonderful demonstrations? I would be guilty of want of faith in God if I under-rated the significance of the response from the women of India. I hope that the students will do their duty. The country certainly expects the lawyers who have hitherto led public agitation to recognise the new awakening.

I have used strong language but I have done so with the greatest deliberation, I am not actuated by any feeling of revenge. I do not consider Englishmen as my enemy. I recognise the worth of many. I enjoy the privilege of having many English friends, but I am a determined enemy of the English rule as is conducted at present and if the power—tapasya—

of one man could destroy it, I would certainly destroy it, if it could not be mended. An Empire that stands for injustice and breach of faith does not deserve to stand if its custodians will not repent and non-co-operation has been devised in order to enable the nation to compel justice.

I hope that Bengal will take her proper place in this movement of self-purification. Bengal began Swadeshi and national education when the rest of India was sleeping. I hope that Bengal will come to the front in this movement for gaining Swaraj and gaining justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab through purification and self-sacrifice.

ON THE WRONG TRACK

Lord Ronaldshay has been doing me the favour of reading my booklet on Indian Home Rule which is a translation of Hind Swaraj. His Lordship told his audience that if Swaraj meant what I had described it to be in the booklet, the Bengalis would have none of it. I am sorry that Swaraj of the Congress resolution does not mean the Swaraj depicted in the booklet; Swaraj according to the Congress means Swaraj that the people of India want, not what the British Government may condescend to give. In so far as I can see, Swaraj will be a Parliament chosen by the people with the fullest power over the finance, the police, the military, the navy, the courts, and the educational institutions.

I am free to confess that the Swaraj I expect to gain within one year, if India responds will be such Swaraj as will make practically impossible the repetition of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, and will enable the nation to do good or evil as it chooses, and not the 'good' at the dictation of an irresponsible, insolent, and godless bureaucracy. Under that Swaraj the nation will have the power to impose a heavy protective tariff on such foreign goods as are capable of being manufactured in India, as also the power to refuse to send a single soldier outside India for the purpose of enslaving the surrounding or remote nationalities. The Swaraj that I dream of will be a possibility only, when the nation is free to make its choice both of good and evil.

I adhere to all I have said in that booklet and I would certainly recommend it to the reader. Government over self is the truest Swaraj, it is synonymous with *moksha* or salvation, and I have seen nothing to alter the view that doctors, lawyers, and railways are no help, and are often a hindrance, to the one thing worth striving after. But I know that association, a satanic activity, such as the Government is engaged in, makes even an effort for such freedom a practical impossibility. I cannot tender allegiance to God and Satan at the same time.

The surest sign of the satanic nature of the present system is that even a nobleman of the type of Lord Ronaldshay is obliged to put us off the track. He will not deal with the one thing needful. Why is he silent about the Punjab? Why does he evade the Khilafat? Can ointments soothe a patient who is suffering from corroding consumption? Does his lordship not see that it is not the inadequacy of the reforms that has set India aflame but that it is the infliction of the two wrongs and the wicked attempt to make us forget them? Does he not see that a complete change of heart is required before reconciliation?

But it has become the fashion nowadays to ascribe hatred to non-co-operationism. And I regret to find that even Col. Wedgewood has fallen into the trap. I make bold to say that the only way to remove hatred is to give it disciplined vent. No man can—I cannot—perform the impossible task of removing hatred so long as contempt and despise for the feelings of India are sedulously nursed. It is a mockery to ask India not to hate when in the same breath India's most sacred feelings are contemptuously brushed aside. India feels weak and helpless and so expresses her helplessness by hating the tyrant who despises her and makes her crawl on the belly, lifts the veils of her innocent women and compels her tender children to acknowledge his power by saluting his flag four times a day. The gospel of Non-co-operation addresses itself to the task of making the people strong and self-reliant. It is an attempt to transform hatred into pity. A strong and self-reliant India will cease to hate Bosworth Smiths and Frank Johnsons, for she will have the power to punish them and therefore the power also to pity and forgive them. To-day she can neither punish nor forgive, and therefore helplessly nurses hatred. If the Mussalmans were strong, they would not hate the English but would fight and wrest from them the dearest possessions of Islam. I know that the Ali Brothers who live only for the honour and the prestige of Islam, and are prepared any moment to die for it, will to-day make friends with the latter Englishmen, if they were to do justice to the Khilafat which it is in their power to do.

I am positively certain that there is no personal element in this fight. Both the Hindus and the Mahomedans would to-day invoke blessings on the English if they would but give proof positive of their goodness, faithfulness, and loyalty to India. Non-co-operation then is a godsend; it will purify and strengthen India; and a strong India will be a strength to the world as an Indian weak and helpless is a curse to mankind. Indian soldiers have involuntarily helped to destroy Turkey and are now destroying the flower of the Arabian nation. I cannot recall a single

campaign in which the Indian soldier has been employed by the British Government for the good of mankind. And yet, (Oh! the shame of it!) Indian Maharajas are never tired of priding themselves on the loyal help they have rendered the English! Could degradation sink any lower?

THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

The belated report of the Congress Constitution Committee has now been published for general information and opinion has been invited from all public bodies in order to assist the deliberations of the All India Congress Committee. It is a pity that, small though the Constitution Committee was, all the members never met at any one time in spite of efforts, to have a meeting of them all. It is perhaps no body's fault that all the members could not meet. At the same time the draft report has passed through the searching examination of all but one member and the report represents the mature deliberations of four out of the five members. It must be stated at the same time that it does not pretend to be the unanimous opinion of the members. Rather than present a dissenting minute, a workable scheme has been brought out leaving each member free to press his own views on the several matters in which they are not quite unanimous. The most important part of the constitution, however, is the alteration of the creed. So far as I am aware there is no fundamental difference of opinion between the members. In my opinion the altered creed represents the exact feeling of the country at the present moment.

I know that the proposed alteration has been subjected to hostile criticism in several newspapers of note. But the extraordinary situation that faces the country is that popular opinion is far in advance of several newspapers which have hitherto commanded influence and have undoubtedly moulded public opinion. The fact is that the formation of opinion to-day is by no means confined to the educated classes, but the masses have taken it upon themselves not only to formulate opinion but to enforce it. It would be a mistake to belittle or ignore this opinion, or to ascribe it to a temporary upheaval. It would be equally a mistake to suppose that this awakening amongst the masses is due either to the activity of the Ali Brothers or myself. For the time being we have the ear of the masses because we voice their sentiments. The masses are by no means so foolish or unintelligent as we sometimes imagine. They often perceive things with their intuition, which we ourselves fail to see with our intellect. But whilst the masses know what they want, they often do not know how to express their wants and, less often, how to get what they want. Herein

comes the use of leadership, and disastrous results can easily follow a bad, hasty, or what is worse, selfish lead.

The first part of the proposed creed expresses the present desire of the nation, and the second shows the way that desire can be fulfilled. In my humble opinion the Congress creed with the proposed alteration is but an extension of the original. And so long as no break with the British connection is attempted, it is strictly within even the existing article that defines the Congress creed. The extension lies in the contemplated possibility of a break with the British connection. In my humble opinion, if India is to make unhampered progress, we must make it clear to the British people that whilst we desire to retain the British connection, if we can rise to our full height with it we are determined to dispense with, and even to get rid of that connection, if that is necessary for full national development. I hold that it is not only derogatory to national dignity but it actually impedes national progress superstitiously to believe that our progress towards our goal is impossible without British connection. It is this superstition which makes some of the best of us tolerate the Punjab wrong and the Khilafat insult. This blind adherence to that connection makes us feel helpless. The proposed alteration in the creed enables us to rid ourselves of our helpless condition. I personally hold that it is perfectly constitutional openly to strive after independence, but lest there may be dispute as to the constitutional character of any movement for complete independence, the doubtful and highly technical adjective "constitutional" has been removed from the altered creed in the draft. Surely it should be enough to ensure that the methods for achieving our end are legitimate, honourable, and peaceful, I believe that this was the reasoning that guided my colleagues in accepting the proposed creed. In any case, such was certainly my view of the whole alteration. There is no desire on my part to adopt any means that are subversive of law and order. I know, however, that I am treading on delicate ground when I write about law and order for, to some of our distinguished leaders even my present methods appear to be lawless and conducive to disorder. But even they will perhaps grant that the retention of the word 'constitutional' cannot protect the country against methods such as I am employing. It gives rise, no doubt, to a luminous legal discussion, but any such discussion is fruitless when the nation means business. The other important alteration refers to the limitation of the number of delegates. I believe that the advantages of such a limitation are obvious. We are fast reaching a time when without any such limitation the Congress will become an unwieldy body. It is

difficult even to have an unlimited number of visitors; it is impossible to transact national business if we have an unlimited number of delegates.

The next important alteration is about the election of the members of the All-India Congress Committee, making that committee practically the Subjects Committee, and the redistribution of India for the purposes of the Congress on a linguistic basis. It is not necessary to comment on these alterations, but I wish to add that if the Congress accepts the principle of limiting the number of delegates it would be advisable to introduce the principle of proportional representation. That would enable all parties who wish to be represented at the Congress.

I observe that *the Servant of India* sees an inconsistency between my implied acceptance of the British Committee, so far as the published draft constitution is concerned, and my recent article in *Young India* on that Committee and the newspaper *India*. But it is well known that for several years I have held my present views about the existence of that body. It would have been irrelevant for me, perhaps, to suggest to my colleagues the extinction of that committee. It was not our function to report on the usefulness or otherwise of the Committee. We were commissioned only for preparing a new constitution. Moreover I knew that my colleagues were not averse to the existence of the British Committee. And the drawing up of a new constitution enabled me to show that where there was no question of principle I was desirous of agreeing quickly with my opponents in opinions. But I propose certainly to press for abolition of the committee as it is at present continued, and the stopping of its organ *India*.

SWARAJ IN NINE MONTHS

Asked by the *Times* representative as to his impressions formed as a result of his activities during the last three months, Mr. Gandhi said:—"My own impression of these three months' extensive experience is that this movement of non-co-operation has come to stay, and it is most decidedly a purifying movement, in spite of isolated instances of rowdyism, as for instance at Mrs. Besant's meeting in Bombay, at some places in Delhi, Bengal, and even in Gujarat. The people are assimilating day after day the spirit of non-violence, not necessarily as a creed, but as an inevitable policy. I expect most startling results, more startling than, say, the discoveries of Sir J.C. Bose, or the acceptance by the people of non-violence. If the Government could be assured beyond any possibility of doubt that no violence would ever be offered by us the Government

would from that moment alter its character, unconsciously and involuntarily, but nonetheless surely on that account."

"Alter its character—in what direction?" asked the *Times* representative.

"Certainly in the direction which we ask it should move—that being in the direction of Government becoming responsive to every call of the nation."

"Will you kindly explain further?" asked the representative.

"By that I mean," said Mr. Gandhi, "people will be able by asserting themselves through fixed determination and self-sacrifice to gain the redress of the Khilafat wrong, the Punjab wrong, and attain the Swaraj of their choice."

"But what is your Swaraj, and where does the Government come in there—the Government which, you say will alter its character unconsciously?"

"My Swaraj," said Mr. Gandhi, "is the Parliamentary Government of India in the modern sense of the term for the time being, and that Government would be secured to us either through the friendly offices of the British people or without them."

"What do you mean by the phrase, 'without them?' questioned the interviewer.

"This movement," continued Mr. Gandhi, "is an endeavour to purge the present Government of selfishness and greed which determine almost every one of their activities. Suppose that we have made it impossible by disassociation from them to feed their greed. They might not wish to remain in India, as happened in the case of Somaliland, where the moment its administration ceased to be a paying proposition they evacuated it."

"How do you think," queried the representative, "in practice this will work out?"

"What I have sketched before you," said Mr. Gandhi, "is the final possibility. What I expect is that nothing of that kind will happen. In so far as I understand the British people I will recognise the force of public opinion when it has become real and patent. Then, and only then, will they realise the hideous injustice which in their name the Imperial ministers and their representatives in India have perpetrated. They will therefore remedy the two wrongs in accordance with the wishes of the people, and they will also offer a constitution exactly in accordance with the wishes of the people of India, as represented by their chosen leaders.

"Supposing that the British Government wish to retire because India is not a paying concern, what do you think will then be the position of India?"

Mr. Gandhi answered: "At that stage surely it is easy to understand that India will then have evolved either outstanding spiritual height or the ability to offer violence, against violence. She will have evolved an organising ability of a high order, and will therefore be in every way able to cope with any emergency that might arise." "In other words," observed the *Times* representative, "you expect the moment of the British evacuation, if such a contingency arises, will coincide with the moment of India's preparedness and ability and conditions favourable for India to take over the Indian administration as a going concern and work it for the benefit and advancement of the Nation?"

Mr. Gandhi answered the question with an emphatic affirmative. "My experience during the last months fills me with the hope," continued Mr. Gandhi, "that within the nine months that remain of the year in which I have expected Swaraj for India we shall redress the two wrongs and we shall see Swaraj established in accordance with the wishes of the people of India."

"Where will the present Government be at the end of the nine months?" Asked the *Times* representative.

Mr. Gandhi, with a significant smile, said: "The lion will then lie with the lamb."

Young India, December, 1920.

THE ATTAINMENT OF SWARAJ

Mr. Gandhi in moving his resolution on the creed before the Congress, said, "The resolution which I have the honour to move is as follows: The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means."

There are only two kinds of objections, so far as I understand, that will be advanced from this platform. One is that we may not to-day think of dissolving the British connection. What I say is that it is derogatory to national dignity to think of permanence of British connection at any cost. We are labouring under a grievous wrong, which it is the personal duty of every Indian to get redressed. This British Government not only refused to redress the wrong, but it refuses to acknowledge *its* mistake and so long as it retains its attitude, it is not possible for us to say all that we want to be or all that we want to get, retaining British connection. No matter what difficulties be in our path, we must make the clearest possible declaration to the world and to the whole of India, that we may not possibly have British connection, if the British people will not do this elementary justice. I do not, for one moment, suggest that we want to end at the

British connection at all costs, unconditionally. If the British connection is for the advancement of India, we do not want to destroy it. But if it is inconsistent with our national self respect, then it is our bounden duty to destroy it. There is room in this resolution for both—those who believe that, by retaining British connection, we can purify ourselves and purify British people, and those who have no belief. As for instance, take the extreme case of Mr. Andrews. He says all hope for India is gone for keeping the British connection. He says there must be complete severance—complete independence. There is room enough in this creed for a man like Mr. Andrews also. Take another illustration, a man like myself or my brother Shaukat Ali. There is certainly no room for us, if we have eternally to subscribe to the doctrine, whether these wrongs are redressed or not, we shall have to evolve ourselves within the British Empire; there is no room for me in that creed. Therefore this creed is elastic enough to take in both shades of opinions and the British people will have to beware that, if they do not want to do justice, it will be the bounden duty of every Indian to destroy the Empire.

I want just now to wind up my remarks with a personal appeal, drawing your attention to an object lesson that was presented in the Bengal camp yesterday. If you want Swaraj, you have got a demonstration of how to get Swaraj. There was a little bit of skirmish, a little bit of squabble, and a little bit of difference in the Bengal camp, as there will always be differences so long as the world lasts. I have known differences between husband and wife, because I am still a husband; I have noticed differences between parents and children, because I am still a father of four boys, and they are all strong enough to destroy their father so far as bodily struggle is concerned; I possess that varied experience of husband and parent; I know that we shall always have squabbles, we shall always have differences but the lesson that I want to draw your attention to is that I had the honour and privilege of addressing both the parties. They gave me their undivided attention and what is more they showed their attachment, their affection and their fellowship for me by accepting the humble advice that I had the honour of tendering to them, and I told them I am not here to distribute justice that can be awarded only through our worthy president. But I ask you not to go to the president, you need not worry him. If you are strong, if you are brave, if you are intent upon getting Swaraj, and if you really want to revise the creed, then you will bottle up your rage, you will bottle up all the feelings of injustice that may rankle in your hearts and forget these things here under this very roof and I told them to forget their differences, to forget the wrongs. I

don't want to tell you or go into the history of that incident. Probably most of you know. I simply want to invite your attention to the fact. I don't say they have settled up their differences. I hope they have but I do know that they undertook to forget the differences. They undertook not to worry the President, they undertook not to make any demonstration here or in the Subjects Committee. All honour to those who listened to that advice.

I only wanted my Bengali friends and all the other friends who have come to this great assembly with a fixed determination to seek nothing but the settlement of their country, to seek nothing but the advancement of their respective rights, to seek nothing but the conservation of the national honour. I appeal to every one of you to copy the example set by those who felt aggrieved and who felt that their heads were broken. I know, before we have done with this great battle on which we have embarked at the special sessions of the Congress, we have to go probably, possibly through a sea of blood, but let it not be said of us or any one of us that we are guilty of shedding blood, but let it be said by generations yet to be born that we suffered, that we shed not somebody's blood but our own, and so I have no hesitation in saying that I do not want to show much sympathy for those who had their heads broken or who were said to be even in danger of losing their lives. What does it matter? It is much better to die at the hands, at least, of our own countrymen. What is there to revenge ourselves about or upon. So I ask everyone of you that if at any time there is blood-boiling within you against some fellow countrymen of yours, even though he may be in the employ of Government, though he may be in the Secret Service, you will take care not to be offended and not to return blow for blow. Understand that the very moment you return the blow from the detective, your cause is lost. This is your non-violent campaign. And so I ask everyone of you not to retaliate but to bottle up all your rage, to dismiss your rage from you and you will rise graver men. I am here to congratulate those who have restrained themselves from going to the President and bringing the dispute before him.

Therefore, I appeal to those who feel aggrieved to feel that they have done the right thing in forgetting it and if they have not forgotten I ask them to try to forget the thing; and that is the object lesson to which I wanted to draw your attention if you want to carry this resolution. Do not carry this resolution only by an acclamation for this resolution, but I want you to accompany the carrying out of this resolution with a faith and resolve which nothing on earth can move. That you are intent upon getting Swaraj at the earliest possible moment and that you are intent

upon getting Swaraj by means that are legitimate, that are honourable and by means that are non-violent, that are peaceful, you have resolved upon, so far you can say to-day. We cannot give battle to this Government by means of steel, but we can give battle by exercising, what I have so often called, "soul-force" and soul-force is not the prerogative of one man of a Sanyasi or even a so-called saint. Soul-force is the prerogative of every human being, female or male and therefore I ask my countrymen, if they want to accept this resolution, to accept it with that firm determination and to understand that it is inaugurated under such good and favourable auspices as I have described to you.

In my humble opinion, the Congress will have done the rightest thing, if it unanimously adopts this resolution. May God grant that you will pass this resolution unanimously, may God grant that you will also have the courage and the ability to carry out the resolution and that within one year.

5. HINDU MOSLEM UNITY

[A dialogue between Editor and reader on the Hindu-Moslem Unity—*Indian Home Rule.*]

THE HINDUS AND THE MAHOMEDANS.

EDITOR: Your last question is a serious one, and yet, on careful consideration, it will be found to be easy of solution. The question arises because of the presence of the railways of the lawyers, and of the doctors. We shall presently examine the last two. We have already considered the railways. I should, however, like to add that man is so made by nature as to require him to restrict his movements as far as his hands and feet will take him. If we did not rush about from place to place by means of railways such other maddening conveniences, much of the confusion that arises would be obviated. Our difficulties are of our own creation. God set a limit to a man's locomotive ambition in the construction of his body. Man immediately proceeded to discover means of overriding the limit. God gifted man with intellect that he might know his Maker. Man abused it, so that he might forget his Maker. I am so constructed that I can only serve my immediate neighbours, but, in my conceit, I pretend to have discovered that I must with my body serve every individual in the Universe. In thus attempting the impossible, man comes in contact with different natures, different religions, and is utterly confounded. According to this

reasoning, it must be apparent to you that railways are a most dangerous institution. Man has therefore gone further away from his Maker.

READER: But I am impatient to hear your answer to my question. Has the introduction of Mahomedanism not unmade the nation?

EDITOR: India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation, they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation. India has ever been such a country. In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals, but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in dreamland. The Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsees and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow countrymen, and they will have to live in unity if only for their own interest. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms: nor has it ever been so in India.

READER: But what about the inborn enmity between Hindus and Mahomedans?

EDITOR: That phrase has been invented by our mutual enemy. When the Hindus and Mahomedans fought against one another, they certainly spoke in that strain. They have long since ceased to fight. How, then, can there be any inborn enmity? Pray remember this, too, that we did not cease to fight only after British occupation. The Hindus flourished under Moslem sovereigns, and Moslems under the Hindu. Each party recognised that mutual fighting was suicidal, and that neither party would abandon its religion by force of arms. Both parties, therefore, decided to live in peace. With the English advent the quarrels recommenced.

The proverbs you have quoted were coined when both were fighting; to quote them now is obviously harmful. Should we not remember that many Hindus and Mahomedans own the same ancestors, and the same blood runs through their veins? Do people become enemies because they change their religion? Is the God of the Mahomedan different from the God of the Hindu? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads, so long as we reach the same goal? Wherein is the cause for quarrelling?

Moreover, there are deadly proverbs as between the followers of Shiva and those of Vishnu, yet nobody suggests that these two do not belong to the same nation. It is said that the Vedic religion is different

from Jainism, but the followers of the respective faiths are not different nations. The fact is that we have become enslaved, and, therefore, quarrel and like to have our quarrels decided by a third party. There are Hindu iconoclasts as there are Mahomedan. The more we advance in true knowledge, the better we shall understand that we need not be at war with those whose religion we may not follow.

READER: Now I would like to know your views about cow protection.

EDITOR: I myself respect the cow, that is, I look upon her with affectionate reverence. The cow is the protector of India, because, it being an agricultural country, is dependent on the cow's progeny. She is a most useful animal in hundreds of ways. Our Mahomedan brethren will admit this.

But, just as I respect the cow so do I respect my fellow-men. A man is just as useful as a cow, no matter whether he be a Mahomedan or a Hindu. Am I, then to fight with or kill a Mahomedan in order to save a cow? In doing so, I would become an enemy as well of the cow as of the Mahomedan. Therefore, the only method I know of protecting the cow is that I should approach my Mahomedan brother and urge him for the sake of the country to join me in protecting her. If he would not listen to me, I should let the cow go for the simple reason that the matter is beyond my ability. If I were over full of pity for the cow, I should sacrifice my life to save her, but not take my brother's. This, I hold, is the law of our religion.

When men become obstinate, it is a difficult thing. If I pull one way, my Moslem brother will pull another. If I put on a superior air, he will return the compliment. If I bow to him gently, he will do it much, more so, and if he does not, I shall not be considered to have done wrong in having bowed. When the Hindus became insistent, the killing of cows increased. In my opinion, cow protection societies may be considered cow killing societies. It is a disgrace to us that we should need such societies. When we forgot how to protect cows, I suppose we needed such societies.

What am I to do when a blood-brother is on the point of killing a cow? Am I to kill him, or to fall down at his feet and implore him? If you admit that I should adopt the latter course I must do the same to my Moslem brother. Who protects the cow from destruction by Hindus when they cruelly ill-treat her? Whoever reasons with the Hindus when they mercilessly belabour the progeny of the cow with their sticks? But this has not prevented us from remaining one nation.

Lastly, if it be true that the Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing, and the Mahomedans do not, what, I pray, is the duty of the former? It is not written that a follower of the religion of Ahimsa (non-killing) may kill a fellow-man. For him the way is straight. In order to save one being, he may not kill another. He can only plead—therein lies his sole duty.

But does every Hindu believe in Ahimsa? Going to the root of the matter, not one man really practises such a religion, because we do destroy life. We are said to follow that religion because we want to obtain freedom from liability to kill any kind of life. Generally speaking, we may observe that many Hindus partake of meat and are not, therefore, followers of Ahimsa. It is, therefore, preposterous to suggest that the two cannot live together amicably because the Hindus believe in Ahimsa and the Mahomedans do not.

These thoughts are put into our minds by selfish and false religious teachers. The English put the finishing touch. They have a habit of writing history; they pretend to study the manners and customs of all peoples, God has given us a limited mental capacity, but they usurp the function of the Godhead and indulge in novel experiments. They write about their own researches in most laudatory terms and hypnotise us into believing them. We in our ignorance, then fall at their feet.

Those who do not wish to misunderstand things may read up the Qur'an, and will find therein hundreds of passages acceptable to the Hindus; and the Bhagavad Gita contains passages to which not a Mahomedan can take exception. Am I to dislike a Mahomedan because there are passages in the Qur'an I do not understand or like? It takes two to make a quarrel. If I do not want to quarrel with a Mahomedan, the latter will be powerless to foist a quarrel on me, and, similarly, I should be powerless if a Mahomedan refuses his assistance to quarrel with me. An arm striking the air will become disjointed. If everyone will try to understand the core of his own religion and adhere to it, and will not allow false teachers to dictate to him, there will be no room left for quarrelling.

READER: But, will the English ever allow the two bodies to join hands?

EDITOR: This question arises out of your timidity. It betrays our shallowness. If two brothers want to live in peace, is it possible for a third party to separate them? If they were to listen to evil counsels, we would consider them to be foolish. Similarly, we Hindus and Mahomedans would have to blame our folly rather than the English, if we allowed

them to put asunder. A clay pot would break through impact; if not with one stone, then with another. The way to save the pot is not to keep it away from the danger point, but to bake it so that no stone would break it. We have then to make our hearts of perfectly baked clay. Then we shall be steeled against all danger. This can be easily done by the Hindus. They are superior in numbers, they pretend that they are more educated, they are, therefore, better able to shield themselves from attack on their amicable relations with the Mahomedans.

There is a mutual distrust between the two communities. The Mahomedans, therefore, ask for certain concessions from Lord Morley. Why should the Hindus oppose this? If the Hindus desisted, the English would notice it, the Mahomedans would gradually begin to trust the Hindus, and brotherliness would be the outcome. We should be ashamed to take our quarrels to the English. Everyone can find out for himself that the Hindus can lose nothing by desisting. The man who has inspired confidence in another has never lost anything in this world.

I do not suggest that the Hindus and the Mahomedans will never fight. Two brothers living together often do so. We shall sometimes have our heads broken. Such a thing ought not to be necessary, but all men are not equi-minded. When people are in a rage, they do many foolish things. These we have to put up with. But, when we do quarrel, we certainly do not want to engage counsel and to resort to English or any law-courts. Two men fight; both have their heads broken, or one only. How shall a third party distribute justice amongst them? Those who fight may expect to be injured.

HINDU-MAHOMEDAN UNITY

Mr. Candler some time ago asked me in an imaginary interview whether if I was sincere in my professions of Hindu-Mahomedan Unity. I would eat and drink with a Mahomedan and give my daughter in marriage to a Mahomedan. This question has been asked again by some friends in another form. Is it necessary for Hindu Mahomedan Unity that there should be interdining and intermarrying? The questioners say that if the two are necessary, real unity can never take place because crores of *Sanatanis* would never reconcile themselves to interdining, much less to intermarriage.

I am one of those who do not consider caste to be a harmful institution. In its origin caste was a wholesome custom and promoted national well-being. In my opinion the idea that interdining or intermarrying is necessary for national growth, is a superstition borrowed from the West. Eating is a

process just as vital as the other sanitary necessities of life. And if mankind had not, much to its harm, made of eating a fetish and indulgence we would have performed the operation of eating in private even as one performs the other necessary functions of life in private. Indeed the highest culture in Hinduism regards eating in that light and there are thousands of Hindus still living who will not eat their food in the presence of anybody. I can recall the names of several cultured men and women who ate their food in entire privacy but who never had any illwill against anybody and who lived on the friendliest terms with all.

Intermarriage is a still more difficult question. If brothers and sisters can live on the friendliest footing without ever thinking of marrying each other, I can see no difficulty in my daughter regarding every Mahomedan brother and *vice versa*. I hold strong views on religion and on marriage. The greater the restraint we exercise with regard to our appetites whether about eating or marrying, the better we become from a religious standpoint. I should despair of ever cultivating amicable relations with the world, if I had to recognise the right or the propriety of any young man offering his hand in marriage to my daughter or to regard it as necessary for me to dine with anybody and everybody. I claim that I am living on terms of friendliness with the whole world. I have never quarrelled with a single Mahomedan or Christian but for years I have taken nothing but fruit in Mahomedan or Christian households. I would most certainly decline to eat food cooked from the same plate with my son or to drink water out of a cup which his lips have touched and which has not been washed. But the restraint or the exclusiveness exercised in these matters by me has never affected the closest companionship with the Mahomedan or the Christian friends or my sons.

But interdining and intermarriage have never been a bar to disunion, quarrels and worse. The Pandavas and the Kauravas flew at one another's throats without compunction although they interdined and intermarried. The bitterness between the English and the Germans has not yet died out.

The fact is that intermarriage and interdining are not necessary factors in friendship and unity though they are often emblems thereof. But insistence on either the one or the other can easily become and is to-day a bar to Hindu-Mahomedan Unity. If we make ourselves believe that Hindus and Mahomedans cannot be one unless they interdine or intermarry, we would be creating an artificial barrier between us which it might be almost impossible to remove. And it would seriously interfere with the flowing unity between Hindus and Mahomedans if, for example, Mahomedan youths consider it lawful to court Hindu girls. The Hindu

parents will not, even if they suspected any such thing, freely admit Mahomedans to their homes as they have begun to do now. In my opinion it is necessary for Hindu and Mahomedan young men to recognise this limitation.

I hold it to be utterly impossible for Hindus and Mahomedans to intermarry and yet retain intact each other's religion. And the true beauty of Hindu-Mahomedan Unity lies in each remaining true to his own religion and yet being true to each other. For, we are thinking of Hindus and Mahomedans even of the most orthodox type being able to regard one another as natural friends instead of regarding one another as natural enemies as they have done hitherto.

What then does the Hindu-Mahomedan Unity consist in and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrow and by mutual toleration. A common goal we have. We wish this great country of ours to be greater and self-governing. We have enough sorrows to share and to-day seeing that the Mahomedans are deeply touched on the question of Khilafat and their case is just, nothing can be so powerful for winning Mahomedans friendship for the Hindu as to give his whole-hearted support to the Mahomedan claim. No amount of drinking out of the same cup or dining out of the same bowl can bind the two as this help in the Khilafat question.

And mutual toleration is a necessity for all time and for all races. We cannot live in peace if the Hindu will not tolerate the Mahomedan form of worship of God and his manners and customs or if the mahomedans will be impatient of Hindu idolatory, cow-worship. It is not necessary for toleration that I must approve of what I tolerate. I heartily dislike drinking, meat eating and smoking, but I tolerate all these in Hindus, Mahomedans and Christians even as I expect them to tolerate my abstinence from all these, although they may dislike it. All the quarrels between the Hindus and the Mahomedans have arisen from each wanting to *force* the other his view.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

There can be no doubt that successful non-co-operation depends as much on Hindu-Muslim Unity as on non-violence. Greatest strain will be put upon both in the course of the struggle and if it survives that strain, victory is a certainty.

A severe strain was put upon it in Agra and it has been stated that when either party went to the authorities they were referred to Maulana Shaukat Ali and me. Fortunately, there was a far better man at hand. Hakimji Ajmal khan is a devout Muslim who commands the confidence and the respect of both the parties. He with his band of workers hastened to Agra, settled the dispute and the parties became friends as they were never before. An incident occurred near Delhi and the same influence worked successfully to avoid what might have become an explosion.

But Hakimji Ajmal khan cannot be everywhere appearing at the exact hour as an angel of peace. Nor can Maulana Shaukat Ali or I go everywhere. And yet perfect peace must be observed between the two communities in spite of attempts to divide them.

Why was there any appeal made to the authorities at all at Agra? If we are to work out non-co-operation with any degree of success we must be able to dispense with the protection of the Government when we quarrel among ourselves. The whole scheme of non-co-operation must break to pieces, if our final reliance is to be upon British intervention for the adjustment of our quarrels or the punishment of the guilty ones. In every village and hamlet there must be at least one Hindu and one Muslim, whose primary business must be to prevent quarrels between the two. Some times however, even blood-brothers come to blows. In the initial stages we are bound to do so here and there. Unfortunately, we who are public workers have made little attempt to understand and influence the masses and least of all the most turbulent among them. During the process of insinuating ourselves in the estimation of the masses and until we have gained control over the unruly, there are bound to be exhibitions of hasty temper now and then. We must learn at such times to do without an appeal to the Government. Hakimji Ajmal Khan has shown us how to do it.

The union that we want is not a patched up thing but a union of hearts based upon a definite recognition of the indubitable proposition that Swaraj for India must be an impossible dream without an indissoluble union between the Hindus and the Muslims of India. It must not be a mere truce. It cannot be based upon mutual fear. It must be a partnership between equals each respecting the religion of the other.

I would frankly despair of reaching such union if there was anything in the holy Quran enjoining upon the followers of Islam to treat Hindus as their natural enemies or if there was anything in Hinduism to warrant a belief in the eternal enmity between the two.

We would ill learn our history if we conclude that because we have quarrelled in the past, we are destined so to continue unless some such

strong power like the British keep us by force of arms from flying at each other's throats. But I am convinced that there is no warrant in Islam or Hinduism for any such belief. True it is that interested fanatical priests in both religions have set the one against the other. It is equally true that Muslim rulers like Christian rulers have used the sword for the propagation of their respective faiths. But in spite of many dark things of the modern times, the world's opinion to-day will as little tolerate forcible conversions as it will tolerate forcible slavery. That probably is the most effective contribution of the scientific spirit of the age. That spirit has revolutionised many a false notion about Christianity as it has about Islam. I do not know a single writer on Islam who defends the use of force in the proselytising process. The influences exerted in our times are far more subtle than that of the sword.

I believe that in the midst of all the bloodshed, chicane and fraud being resorted to on a colossal scale in the west, the whole humanity is silently but surely making progress towards a better age. And India by finding true independence and self-expression through an imperishable Hindu-Muslim unity and through non-violent means, i.e., unadulterated self sacrifice can point a way out of the prevailing darkness.

6. TREATMENT OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

DEPRESSED CLASSES

Vivekanand used to call the Panchamas 'suppressed classes.' There is no doubt that Vivekanand's is a more accurate adjective. We have suppressed them and have consequently become ourselves depressed. That we have become the 'Pariahs of the Empire' is, in Gokhale's language, the retributive justice meted out to us by a just God. A correspondent indignantly asks me in a pathetic letter reproduced elsewhere, what I am doing for them. I have given the letter with the correspondent's own heading. Should not we the Hindus wash our bloodstained hands before we ask the English to wash theirs? This is a proper question reasonably put. And if a member of a slave nation could deliver the suppressed classes from their slavery without freeing myself from my own, I would do so to-day. But it is an impossible task. A slave has not the freedom even to do the right thing. It is a right for me to prohibit the importation of foreign goods, but I have no power to bring it about. It was right for Maulana Mahomed Ali to go to Turkey and to tell the Turks personally that India was with them in their righteous struggle.

He was not free to do so. If I had a truly national legislative I would answer Hindu insolence by creating special and better wells for the exclusive use of suppressed classes and by erecting better and more numerous schools for them, so that there would be not a single member of the suppressed classes left without a school to teach their children. But I must wait for that better day.

Meanwhile are the depressed classes to be left to their own resources? Nothing of the sort. In my own humble manner I have done and am doing all I can for my Panchama brother.

There are three courses open to those downtrodden members of the nation. For their impatience they may call in the assistance of the slave owning Government. They will get it but they will fall from the frying pan into the fire. To-day they are slaves of slaves. By seeking Government aid, they will be used for suppressing their kith and kin. Instead of being sinned against, they will themselves be the sinners. The Mussalmans tried it and failed. They found that they were worse off than before. The Sikhs did it unwittingly and failed. To-day there is no more discontented community in India than the Sikhs. Government aid is therefore no solution.

The second is rejection of Hinduism and wholesale conversion to Islam or Christianity. And if a change of religion could be justified for worldly betterment, I would advise it without hesitation. But religion is a matter of the heart. No physical inconvenience can warrant abandonment of one's own religion. If the inhuman treatment of the Panchamas were a part of Hinduism, its rejection would be a paramount duty both for them and for those like me who would not make a fetish even of religion and condone every evil in its sacred name. But, I believe that untouchability is no part of Hinduism. It is rather its excrescence to be removed by every effort. And there is quite an army of Hindu reformers who have set their heart upon ridding Hinduism of this blot. Conversion, therefore, I hold, is no remedy whatsoever.

Then there remains, finally, self-help and self-dependence, with such aid as the non-Panchama Hindus will render of their own motion, not as a matter of patronage but as a matter of duty. And herein comes the use of non-co-operation. My correspondent was correctly informed by Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Hanumantarao that I would favour well-regulated non-co-operation for this acknowledged evil. But non-co-operation means independence of outside help, it means effort from within. It would not be non-co-operation to insist on visiting prohibited areas. That may be civil disobedience if it is peacefully carried out. But I have found to my

cost that civil disobedience requires far greater preliminary training and self-control. All can non-co-operate, but few only can offer civil disobedience. Therefore, by way of protest against Hinduism, the Panchamas can certainly stop all contact and connection with the other Hindus so long as special grievances are maintained. But this means organised intelligent effort. And so far as I can see, there is no leader among the Panchamas who can lead them to victory through non-co-operation.

The better way, therefore, perhaps, is for the Panchamas heartily to join the great national movement that is now going on for throwing off the slavery of the present Government. It is easy enough for the Panchama friends to see that non-co-operation against this evil government presupposes co-operation between the different sections forming the Indian nation. The Hindus must realise that if they wish to offer successful non-co-operation against the Government, they must make common cause with the Panchamas, even as they have made common cause with the Mussalmans. Non-co-operation with it is free from violence, is essentially a movement of intensive self-purification. That process has commenced and whether the Panchamas deliberately take part in it or not, the rest of the Hindus dare not neglect them without hampering their own progress. Hence though the Panchama problem is as dear to me as life itself, I rest satisfied with the exclusive attention to national non-co-operation. I feel sure that the greater includes the less.

Closely allied to this question is the non-Brahmin question. I wish I had studied it more closely than I have been able to. A quotation from my speech delivered at a private meeting in Madras has been torn from its context and misused to further the antagonism between the so-called Brahmins and the so-called non-Brahmins. I do not wish to retract a word of what I said at that meeting, I was appealing to those who are accepted as Brahmins. I told them that in my opinion the treatment of non-Brahmins by the Brahmins was as satanic as the treatment of us by the British. I added that the non-Brahmins should be placated without any ado or bargaining. But my remarks were never intended to encourage the powerful non-Brahmins of Maharashtra or Madras, or the mischievous element among them, to overawe the so-called Brahmins. I use the word 'so-called' advisedly. For the Brahmins who have freed themselves from the thralldom of superstitious orthodoxy have not only no quarrel with non-Brahmins as such, but are in every way eager to advance non-Brahmins wherever they are weak. No lover of his country can possibly achieve its general advance if he dared to neglect the least of his

countrymen. Those non-Brahmins therefore who are coqueting with the Government are selling themselves and the nation to which they belong. By all means let those who have faith in the Government help to sustain it, but let no Indian worthy of his birth cut off his nose to spite the face.

AMELIORATION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

The resolution of the Senate of the Gujarat National University in regard to Mr. Andrews' question about the admission of children of the 'depressed' classes to the schools affiliated to that University is reported to have raised a flutter in Ahmedabad. Not only has the flutter given satisfaction to a 'Times of India' correspondent, but the occasion has led to the discovery by him of another defect in the constitution of the Senate in that it does not contain a single Muslim member. The discovery, however, I may inform the reader, is no proof of the want of national character of the University. The Hindu-Muslim unity is no mere lip expression. It requires no artificial proofs. The simple reason why there is no Mussalman representative on the Senate is that no higher educated Mussalman, able to give his time, has been found to take sufficient interest in the national education movement. I merely refer to this matter to show that we must reckon with attempts to discredit the movement even misinterpretation of motives. That is a difficulty from without and easier to deal with.

The 'depressed' classes difficulty is internal and therefore far more serious because it may give rise to a split and weaken the cause—no cause can survive internal difficulties if they are indefinitely multiplied. Yet there can be no surrender in the matter of principles for the avoidance of splits. You cannot promote a cause when you are undermining it by surrendering its vital parts. The depressed classes problem is a vital part of the cause. *Swaraj* is as inconceivable without full reparation to the 'depressed' classes as it is impossible without real Hindu-Muslim unity. In my opinion we have become 'pariahs of the Empire' because we have created 'pariahs' in our midst. The slave owner is always more hurt than the slave. We shall be unfit to gain *Swaraj* so long as we would keep in bondage a fifth of the population of Hindustan. Have we not made the 'pariah' crawl on his belly? Have we not segregated him? And if it is religion so to treat the 'pariah.' It is the religion of the white race to segregate us. And if it is no argument for the white races to say that we are satisfied with the badge of our inferiority, it is less for us to say that the 'pariah' is satisfied with his. Our slavery is complete when we begin to hug it.

The Gujarat Senate, therefore, counted the cost when it refused to bend before the storm. This non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. We may not cling to putrid customs and claim the pure boon of *Swaraj*. Untouchability I hold is a custom, not an integral part of Hinduism. The world advanced in thought, though it is still barbarous in action. And no religion can stand that which is not based on fundamental truths. Any glorification of error will destroy a religion as surely as disregard of a disease is bound to destroy a body.

This government of ours is an unscrupulous corporation. It has ruled by dividing Mussalmans from Hindus. It is quite capable of taking advantage of the internal weaknesses of Hinduism. It will set the 'depressed' classes against the rest of the Hindus, non-Brahmins against Brahmins. The Gujarat Senate resolution does not end the trouble. It merely points out the difficulty. The trouble will end only when the masses and classes of Hindus have rid themselves of the sin of untouchability. A Hindu lover of *Swaraj* will as assiduously work for the amelioration of the lot of the 'depressed' classes as he works for Hindu-Muslim unity. We must treat them as our brothers and give them the same rights that we claim for ourselves.

THE SIN OF UNTOUCHABILITY

It is worthy of note that the subjects Committee accepted without any opposition the clause regarding the sin of untouchability. It is well that the National assembly passed the resolution stating that the removal of this blot on Hinduism was necessary for the attainment of *Swaraj*. The Devil succeeds only by receiving help from his fellows. He always takes advantage of the weakest spots in our natures in order to gain mastery over us. Even so does the Government retain its control over us through our weaknesses or vices. And if we would render ourselves proof against its machination, we must remove our weaknesses. It is for that reason that I have called non-co-operation a process of purification. As soon as that process is completed, this government must fall to pieces for want of the necessary environment, just as mosquitoes cease to haunt a place whose cess-pools are filled up and dried.

Has not a just Nemesis overtaken us for the crime of untouchability? Have we not reaped as we have sown? Have we not practised Dwyerism and O'Dwyerism on our own kith and kin? We have segregated the 'pariah' and we are in turn segregated in the British Colonies. We deny him the use of public wells; we throw the leavings of our plates at him. His very shadow pollutes us. Indeed there is no charge that the 'pariah' cannot fling in our faces and which we do not fling in the faces of Englishmen.

How is this blot on Hinduism to be removed? 'Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you.' I have often told English officials that, if they are friends and servants of India, they should come down from their pedestal, cease to be patrons, demonstrate by their loving deeds that they are in every respect our friends, and believe us to be equals in the same sense they believe fellow Englishmen to be their equals. After the experiences of the Punjab and the Khilafat, I have gone a step further and asked them to repent and to change their hearts. Even so is it necessary for us Hindus to repent of the wrong we have done, to alter our behaviour towards those whom we have 'suppressed' by a system as devilish as we believe the English system of the Government of India to be. We must not throw a few miserable schools at them; we must not adopt the air of superiority towards them. We must treat them as our blood brothers as they are in fact. We must return to them the inheritance of which we have robbed them. And this must not be the act of a few English-knowing reformers merely, but it must be a conscious voluntary effort on the part of the masses. We may not wait till eternity for this much belated reformation. We must aim at bringing it about within this year of grace, probation, preparation and *tapasya*. It is a reform not to follow *Swaraj* but to precede it.

Untouchability is not a sanction of religion, it is a devise of Satan. The devil has always quoted scriptures. But scriptures cannot transcend reason and truth. They are intended to purify reason and illuminate truth. I am not going to burn a spotless horse because the Vedas are reported to have advised, tolerated, or sanctioned the sacrifice. For me the Vedas are divine and unwritten. 'The letter killeth.' It is the spirit that giveth the light. And the spirit of the Vedas is purity, truth, innocence, chastity, humility, simplicity, forgiveness, godliness, and all that makes a man or woman noble and brave. There is neither nobility nor bravery in treating the great and uncomplaining scavengers of the nation as worse than dogs to be despised and spat upon. Would that God gave us the strength and the wisdom to become voluntary scavengers of the nation as the 'suppressed' classes are forced to be. There are Augean stables enough and to spare for us to clean.

7. TREATMENT OF INDIANS ABROAD

INDIANS ABROAD

The prejudice against Indian settlers outside India is showing itself in a variety of ways: Under the impudent suggestion of sedition the Fiji

Government has deported Mr. Manilal Doctor who with his brave and cultured wife has been rendering assistance to the poor indentured Indians of Fiji in a variety of ways. The whole trouble has arisen over the strike of the labourers in Fiji. Indentures have been canceled, but the spirit of slavery is by no means dead. We do not know the genesis of the strike; we do not know that the strikers have done no wrong. But we do know what is behind when a charge of sedition is brought against the strikers and their friends. The readers must remember that the Government that has scented sedition in the recent upheaval in Fiji is the Government that had the hardihood to libel Mr. Andrew's character. What can be the meaning of sedition in connection with the Fiji strikers and Mr. Manilal Doctor? Did they and he want to seize the reins of Government? Did they want any power in that country? They struck for elementary freedom. And it is a prostitution of terms to use the word sedition in such connection. The strikers may have been overhasty. Mr. Manilal Doctor may have misled them. If his advice bordered on the criminal he should have been tried. The information in our possession goes to show that he has been strictly constitutional. Our point, however, is that it is an abuse of power for the Fiji Government to have deported Mr. Manilal Doctor without a trial. It is wrong in principle to deprive a person of his liberty on mere suspicion and without giving him an opportunity of clearing his character. Mr. Manilal Doctor, be it remembered, has for years past made Fiji his home. He has, we believe, bought property there. He has children born in Fiji. Have the children no rights? Has the wife none? May a promising career be ruined at the bidding of a lawless Government? Has Mr. Manilal Doctor been compensated for the losses he must sustain? We trust that the Government of India which has endeavoured to protect the rights of Indian settlers abroad will take up the question of Mr. Doctor's deportation.

Nor is Fiji the only place where the spirit of lawlessness among the powerful has come to the surface. Indians of (the late) German East Africa find themselves in a worse position than heretofore. They state that even their property is not safe. They have to pay all kinds of dues on passports. They are hampered in their trade. They are not able even to send money orders.

In British East Africa the cloud is perhaps the thickest. The European settlers there are doing their utmost to deprive the Indian settlers of practically every right they have hitherto possessed. An attempt is being made to compass their ruin both by legislative enactment and administrative action.

In South Africa every Indian who has anything to do with that part of the British Dominions is watching with bated breath the progress of commission that is now sitting.

The Government of India have no easy job in protecting the interests of Indian settlers in these various parts of His Majesty's dominions. They will be able to do so only by following the firmest and the most consistent policy. Justice is admittedly on the side of the Indian settlers. But they are the weak party. A strong agitation in India followed by strong action by the Government of India can alone save the situation.

INDIANS OVERSEAS

The meeting held at the Excelsior Theatre in Bombay to pass resolutions regarding East Africa and Fiji, and presided over by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, was an impressive gathering. The Theatre was filled to overflowing. Mr. Andrews' speech made clear what is needed. Both the political and the civil rights of Indians of East Africa are at stake. Mr. Anantani, himself an East African settler, showed in a forceful speech that the Indians were the pioneer settlers. An Indian sailor named Kano directed the celebrated Vasco De Gama to India. He added amid applause that Stanley's expedition for the search and relief of Dr. Livingstone was also fitted out by Indians. Indian workmen had built the Uganda Railway at much peril to their lives. An Indian contractor had taken the contract. Indian artisans had supplied the skill. And now their countrymen were in danger of being debarred from its use.

The uplands of East Africa have been declared a Colony and the lowlands a Protectorate. There is a sinister significance attached to the declaration. The Colonial system gives the Europeans larger powers. It will tax all the resources of the Government of India to prevent the healthy uplands from becoming a whiteman's preserve and the Indians from being relegated to the swampy lowlands.

The question of franchise will soon become a burning one. It will be suicidal to divide the electorate or to appoint Indians by nomination. There must be one general electoral roll applying the same qualifications to all the voters. This principle, as Mr. Andrews reminded the meeting, had worked well at the Cape.

The second part of the East African resolution shows the condition of our countrymen in the late German East Africa. Indian soldiers fought there and now the position of Indians is worse than under German rule. H.H. the Agakhan suggested that German East Africa should be administered from India. Sir Theodore Morison would have couped up

all Indians in German East Africa. The result was that both the proposals went by the board and the expected has happened. The greed of the English speculator has prevailed and he is trying to squeeze out the Indian. What will the Government of India protect? Has it the will to do so? Is not India itself being exploited? Mr. Jehangir Petit recalled the late Mr. Gokhale's views that we were not to expect a full satisfaction regarding the status of our countrymen across the seas until we had put our own house in order. Helots are in our own country, how could we do better outside? Mr. Petit wants systematic and severe retaliation. In my opinion, retaliation is a double-edged weapon. It does not fail to hurt the user if it also hurts the party against whom it is used. And who is to give effect to retaliation? It is too much to expect an English Government to adopt effective retaliation against their own people. They will expostulate, they will remonstrate, but they will not go to war with their own Colonies. For the logical outcome of retaliation must mean war, if retaliation will not answer.

Let us face the facts frankly. The problem is difficult alike for Englishmen and for us. The Englishmen and Indians do not agree in the Colonies. The Englishmen do not want us where they can live. Their civilisation is different from ours. The two cannot coalesce until there is mutual respect. The Englishman considers himself to belong to the ruling race. The Indian struggles to think that he does not belong to the subject race and in the very act of thinking admits his subjection. We must then attain equality at home before we can make any real impression abroad.

This is not to say that we must not strive to do better abroad whilst we are ill at ease in our own home. We must preserve, we must help our countrymen who have settled outside India. Only if we recognise the true situation, we and our countrymen abroad will learn to be patient and know that our chief energy must be concentrated on a betterment of our position at home. If we can raise our status here to that of equal partners not in name but in reality so that every Indian might feel it, all else must follow as a matter of course.

PARIAHS OF THE EMPIRE

The memorable Conference at Gujrat in its resolution on the status of Indians abroad has given it as its opinion that even this question may become one more reason for non-co-operation. And so it may. Nowhere has there been such open defiance of every canon of justice and propriety as in the shameless decision of confiscation of Indian rights in the Kenia Colony announced by its Governor. This decision has been supported by

Lord Milnor and Mr. Montagu. And his Indian colleagues are satisfied with the decision. Indians, who have made East Africa, who out-number the English, are deprived practically of the right of representation on the Council. They are to be segregated in parts not habitable by the English. They are to have neither the political nor the material comfort. They are to become 'Pariahs' in a country made by their own labour, wealth and intelligence. The Viceroy is pleased to say that he does not like the outlook and is considering the steps to be taken to vindicate the justice. He is not met with a new situation. The Indians of East Africa had warned him of the impending doom. And if His Excellency has not yet found the means of ensuring redress, he is not likely to do it in future. I would respectfully ask his Indian colleagues whether they can stand this robbery of their countrymen rights.

In South Africa the situation is not less disquieting. My misgivings seem to be proving true, and repatriation is more likely to prove compulsory than voluntary. It is a response to the anti-Asiatic agitation, not a measure of relief for indigent Indians. It looks very like a trap laid for the unwary Indian. The Union Government appears to be taking an unlawful advantage of a section of a relieving law designed for a purpose totally different from the one now intended.

As for Fiji, the crime against humanity is evidently to be hushed up. I do hope that unless an inquiry is to be made into the Fiji Martial Law doings, no Indian member will undertake to go to Fiji. The Government of India appear to have given an undertaking to send Indian labour to Fiji provided the commission that was to proceed there in order to investigate the condition on the spot returns with a favourable report.

For British Guiana I observe from the papers received from that quarter, that the mission that came here is already declaring that Indian labour will be forthcoming from India. There seems to me to be no real prospect for Indian enterprise in that part of the world. We are not wanted in any part of the British Dominion except as Pariahs to do the scavenging for the European settlers.

The situation is clear. We are Pariahs in our own home. We get only what Government intend to give, not what we demand and have a right to. We may get the crumbs, never the loaf. I have seen large and tempting crumbs from a lavish table. And I have seen the eyes of our Pariahs—the shame of Hinduism—brightening to see those heavy crumbs filling their baskets. But the superior Hindu, who is filling the basket from a safe distance, knows that they are unfit for his own consumption. And so we in our turn may receive even Governorships which the real rulers no

longer require or which they cannot retain with safety for their material interest—the political and material hold on India. It is time we realised our true status.

8. NON-CO-OPERATION

A writer in the "Times of India," the Editor of that wonderful daily and Mrs. Besant have all in their own manner condemned non-co-operation conceived in connection with the Khilafat movement. All the three writings naturally discuss many side issues which I shall omit for the time being. I propose to answer two serious objections raised by the writers. The sobriety with which they are stated entitles them to a greater consideration than if they had been given in violent language. In non-co-operation, the writers think, it would be difficult if not impossible to avoid violence. Indeed violence, the "Times of India" editorial says, has already commenced in that ostracism has been resorted to in Calcutta and Delhi. Now I fear that ostracism to a certain extent is impossible to avoid. I remember in South Africa in the initial stages of the passive resistance campaign those who had fallen away were ostracised. Ostracism is violent or peaceful in according to the manner in which it is practised. A congregation may well refuse to recite prayers after a priest who prizes his title above his honour. But the ostracism will become violent if the individual life of a person is made unbearable by insults innuendoes or abuse. The real danger of violence lies in the people resorting to non-co-operation becoming impatient and revengeful. This may happen, if, for instance, payment of taxes is suddenly withdrawn or if pressure is put upon soldiers to lay down their arms. I however do not fear any evil consequences, for the simple reason that every responsible Mahomedan understands that non-co-operation to be successful must be totally unattended with violence. The other objection raised is that those who may give up their service may have to starve. That is just a possibility but a remote one, for the committee will certainly make due provision for those who may suddenly find themselves out of employment. I propose however to examine the whole of the difficult question much more fully in a future issue and hope to show that if Indian-Mahomedan feeling is to be respected, there is nothing left but non-co-operation if the decision arrived at is adverse.

MR. MONTAGU ON THE KHILAFAT AGITATION

Mr. Montagu does not like the Khilafat agitation that is daily gathering

force. In answer to questions put in the House of Commons, he is reported to have said that whilst he acknowledged that I had rendered distinguished services to the country in the past, he could not look upon my present attitude with equanimity and that it was not to be expected that I could now be treated as leniently as I was during the Rowlatt Act agitation. He added that he had every confidence in the central and the local Governments, that they were carefully watching the movement and that they had full power to deal with the situation.

This statement of Mr. Montagu has been regarded in some quarters as a threat. It has even been considered to be a blank cheque for the Government of India to re-establish the reign of terror if they chose. It is certainly inconsistent with his desire to base the Government on the goodwill of the people. At the same time if the Hunter Committee's finding be true and if I was the cause of the disturbances last year, I was undoubtedly treated with exceptional leniency, I admit too that my activity this year is fraught with greater peril to the Empire as it is being conducted to-day than was last year's activity. Non-co-operation in itself is more harmless than civil disobedience, but in its effect it is far more dangerous for the Government than civil disobedience. Non-co-operation is intended so far to paralyse the Government, as to compel justice from it. If it is carried to the extreme point, it can bring the Government to a standstill.

A friend who has been listening to my speeches once asked me whether I did not come under the sedition section of the Indian Penal Code. Though I had not fully considered it, I told him that very probably I did and that I could not plead 'not guilty' if I was charged under it. For I must admit that I can pretend to no 'affection' for the present Government. And my speeches are intended to create 'disaffection' such that the people might consider it a shame to assist or co-operate with a Government that had forfeited all title to confidence, respect or support.

I draw no distinction between the Imperial and the Indian Government. The latter has accepted, on the Khilafat, the policy imposed upon it by the former. And in the Punjab case the former has endorsed the policy of terrorism and emasculation of a brave people initiated by the latter. British ministers have broken their pledged word and wantonly wounded the feelings of the seventy million Mussalmans of India. Innocent men and women were insulted by the insolent officers of the Punjab Government. Their wrongs not only unrighted but the very officers who so cruelly subjected them to barbarous humiliation retain office under the Government.

When at Amritsar last year I pleaded with all the earnestness I could

command for co-operation with the Government and for response to the wishes expressed in the Royal Proclamation; I did so because I honestly believed that a new era was about to begin, and that the old spirit of fear, distrust and consequent terrorism was about to give place to the new spirit of respect, trust and good-will. I sincerely believed that the Mussalman sentiment would be placated and that the officers that had misbehaved during the Martial Law regime in the Punjab would be at least dismissed and the people would be otherwise made to feel that a Government that had always been found quick (and rightly) to punish popular excesses would not fail to punish its agents' misdeeds. But to my amazement and dismay I have discovered that the present representatives of the Empire have become dishonest and unscrupulous. They have no real regard for the wishes of the people of India and they count Indian honour as of little consequence.

I can no longer retain affection for a Government so evilly manned as it is now-a-days. And for me, it is humiliating to retain my freedom and be a witness to the continuing wrong. Mr. Montagu however is certainly right in threatening me with deprivation of my liberty if I persist in endangering the existence of the Government. For that must be the result if my activity bears fruit. My only regret is that inasmuch as Mr. Montagu admits my past services, he might have perceived that there must be something exceptionally bad in the Government if a well-wisher like me could no longer give his affection to it. It was simpler to insist on justice being done to the Mussalmans and to the Punjab than to threaten me with punishment so that the injustice might be perpetuated. Indeed I fully expect it will be found that even in promoting disaffection towards an unjust Government I have rendered greater services to the Empire than I am already credited with.

At the present moment, however, the duty of those who approve of my activity is clear. They ought on no account to resent the deprivation of my liberty, should the Government of India deem it to be their duty to take it away. A citizen has no right to resist such restriction imposed in accordance with the laws of the State to which he belongs. Much less have those who sympathize with him. In my case there can be no question of sympathy. For I deliberately oppose the Government to the extent of trying to put its very existence in jeopardy. For my supporters, therefore, it must be a moment of joy when I am imprisoned. It means the beginning of success if only the supporters continue the policy for which I stand. If the Government arrest me, they would do so in order to stop the progress of non-co-operation which I preach. It follows that if non-co-operation

continues with unabated vigour, even after my arrest, the Government must imprison others or grant the people's wish in order to gain their co-operation. Any eruption of violence on the part of the people even under provocation would end in disaster. Whether, therefore, it is I, or anyone else who is arrested during the campaign, the first condition of success is that there must be no resentment shown against it. We cannot imperil the very existence of a Government and quarrel with its attempt to save itself by punishing those who place it in danger.

AT THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY

Dr. Sapru delivered before the Khilafat Conference at Allahabad an impassioned address sympathising with the Mussalmans in their trouble but dissuaded them from embarking on non-co-operation. He was frankly unable to suggest a substitute but was emphatically of opinion that whether there was a substitute or not non-co-operation was a remedy worse than the disease. He said further that Mussalmans will be taking upon their shoulders, a serious responsibility, if whilst they appealed to the ignorant masses to join them, they could not appeal to the Indian judges to resign and if they did they would not succeed.

I acknowledge the force of Dr. Sapru's last argument. At the back of Dr. Sapru's mind is the fear that non-co-operation by the ignorant people would lead to distress and chaos and would do no good. In my opinion any non-co-operation is bound to do some good. Even the Viceragal door-keeper saying, 'Please Sir, I can serve the Government no longer because it has hurt my national honour' and resigning is a step mightier and more effective than the mightiest speech declaiming against the Government for its injustice.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to appeal to the door-keeper until one has appealed to the highest in the land. And as I propose, if the necessity arose, to ask the door-keepers of the Government to dissociate themselves from an unjust Government I propose now to address, an appeal to the Judges and the Executive Councillors to join the protest that is rising from all over India against the double wrong done to India, on the Khilafat and the Punjab question. In both, national honour is involved.

I take it that these gentlemen have entered upon their high offices not for the sake of emolument, nor I hope for the sake of fame, but for the sake of serving their country. It was not for money, for they were earning more than they do now. It must not be for fame, for they cannot buy fame at the cost of national honour. The only consideration, that can at the

present moment keep them in office must be service of the country.

When the people have faith in the government, when it represents the popular will, the judges and the executive officials possibly serve the country. But when that government does not represent the will of the people, when it supports dishonesty and terrorism, the judges and the executive officials by retaining office become instrument of dishonesty and terrorism. And the least, therefore, that these holders of high offices can do is to cease to become agents of a dishonest and terrorising government.

For the judges, the objection will be raised that they are above politics, and so they are and should be. But the doctrine is true only in so far as the government is on the whole for the benefit of the people and at least represents the will of the majority. Not to take part in politics means not to take sides. But when a whole country has one mind, one will, when a whole country has been denied justice, it is no longer a question of party politics, it is a matter of life and death. It then becomes the duty of every citizen to refuse to serve a government which misbehaves and flouts national wish. The judges are at that moment bound to follow the nation if they are ultimately its servants.

There remains another argument to be examined. It applies to both the judges and the members of the executive. It will be urged that my appeal could only be meant for the Indians and what good can it do by Indians renouncing offices which have been won for the nation by hard struggle. I wish that I could make an effective appeal to the English as well as the Indians. But I confess that I have written with the mental reservation that the appeal is addressed only to the Indians. I must, therefore, examine the argument just stated. Whilst it is true that these offices have been secured after a prolonged struggle, they are of use not because of the struggle, but because they are intended to serve the nation. The moment they cease to possess that quality, they become useless and as in the present case harmful, no matter how hard-earned and therefore valuable they may have been at the outset.

I would submit too to our distinguished countrymen who occupy high offices that their giving up will bring the struggle to a speedy end and would probably obviate the danger attendant upon the masses being called upon to signify their disapproval by withdrawing co-operation. If the titleholders gave up their titles, if the holders of honorary offices gave up their appointment and if the high officials gave up their posts, and the would-be councillors boycotted the councils, the Government would quickly come to its senses and give effect to the people's will. For

the alternative before the Government then would be nothing but despotic rule pure and simple. That would probably mean military dictatorship. The world's opinion has advanced so far that Britain dare not contemplate such dictatorship with equanimity. The taking of the steps suggested by me will constitute the peace fullest revolution the world has ever seen. Once the infallibility of non-co-operation is realised, there is an end to all bloodshed and violence in any shape or form.

Undoubtedly, a cause must be grave to warrant the drastic method of national non-co-operation. I do say that the affront such as has been put upon Islam cannot be repeated for a century. Islam must rise now or 'be fallen' if not for ever, certainly for a century. And I cannot imagine a graver wrong than the massacre of Jallianwalla and the barbarity that followed it, the whitewash by the Hunter Committee, the dispatch of the Government of India, Mr. Montagu's letter upholding the Viceroy and the then Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, the refusal to remove officials who made of the lives of the Punjabis 'a hell' during the Martial Law period. These act constitute a complete series of continuing wrongs against India which if India has any sense of honour, she must right at the sacrifice of all the material wealth she possesses. If she does not, she will have bartered her soul for a 'mess of pottage.'

NON-CO-OPERATION EXPLAINED

A representative of Madras Mail called on Mr. M.K. Gandhi at his temporary residence in the Pursewalkam High road for an interview on the subject of non-co-operation. Mr. Gandhi, who has come to Madras on a tour to some of the principal Muslim centres in Southern India, was busy with a number of workers discussing his programme; but he expressed his readiness to answer questions on the chief topic which is agitating Muslims and Hindus.

"After your experience of the Satyagraha agitation last year, Mr. Gandhi, are you still hopeful and convinced of the wisdom of advising non-co-operation?"—"Certainly."

"How do you consider conditions have altered since the Satyagraha movement of last year?"—"I consider that people are better disciplined now than they were before. In this I include even the masses who I have had opportunities of seeing in large numbers in various parts of the country."

"And you are satisfied that the masses understand the spirit of Satyagraha?"—"Yes."

"And that is why you are pressing on with the programme of non-co-

operation?"—"Yes. Moreover, the danger that attended the civil disobedience part of Satyagraha does not apply to non-co-operation, because in non-co-operation we are not taking up civil disobedience of laws as a mass movement. The result hitherto has been most encouraging. For instance, people in Sindh and Delhi in spite of the irritating restrictions upon their liberty by the authorities have carried out the Committee's instructions in regard to the Seditious Meetings Proclamation and to the prohibition of posting placards on the walls which we hold to be inoffensive but which the authorities consider to be offensive."

"What is the pressure which you expect to bring to bear on the authorities if co-operation is withdrawn?"—"I believe, and everybody must grant, that no Government can exist for a single moment without the co-operation of the people, willing or forced, and if people suddenly withdraw their co-operation in every detail, the Government will come to a stand-still."

"But is there not a big 'If' in it?"—"Certainly there is."

"And how do you propose to succeed against the big 'If'?"—"In my plan of campaign expediency has no room. If the Khilafat movement has really permeated the masses and the classes, there must be adequate response from the people."

"But are you not begging the question?"—"I am not begging the question, because so far as the data before me go, I believe that the Muslims keenly feel the Khilafat grievance. It remains to be seen whether their feeling is intense enough to evoke in them the measure of sacrifice adequate for successful non-co-operation."

"That is, your survey of the conditions, you think, justifies your advising non-co-operation in the full conviction that you have behind you the support of the vast masses of the Mussalman population?"—"Yes."

"This non-co-operation, you are satisfied, will extend to complete severance of co-operation with the Government?"—"No; nor is it at the present moment my desire that it should. I am simply practising non-co-operation to the extent that is necessary to make the Government realise the depth of popular feeling in the matter and the dissatisfaction with the Government that all that could be done has not been done either by the Government of India or by the Imperial Government, whether on the Khilafat question or on the "Punjab question."

"Do you Mr. Gandhi, realise that even amongst Mahomedans there are sections of people who are not enthusiastic over non-co-operation

however much they may feel the wrong that has been done to their community?"—"Yes. But their number is smaller than those who are prepared to adopt non-co-operation."

"And yet does not the fact that there has not been an adequate response to your appeal for resignation of titles and offices and for boycott of elections of the Councils indicate that you may be placing more faith in their strength of conviction than is warranted?"—"I think not; for the reason that the stage has only just come into operation and our people are always most cautious and slow to move. Moreover, the first stage largely affects the uppermost strata of society, who represent a microscopic minority though they are undoubtedly an influential body of people."

"This upper class, you think, has sufficiently responded to your appeal?"—"I am unable to say either one way or the other at present. I shall be able to give a definite answer at the end of this month."

"Do you think that without one's loyalty to the King and the Royal Family being questioned, one can advocate non-co-operation in connection with the Royal visit?"—"Most decidedly; for the simple reason that if there is any disloyalty about the proposed boycott of the Prince's visit, it is disloyalty to the Government of the day and not to the person of His Royal highness."

"What do you think is to be gained by promoting this boycott in connection with the Royal visit?"—"Because I want to show that the people of India are not in sympathy with the Government of the day and that they strongly disapprove of the policy of the Government in regard to the Punjab and Khilafat, and even in respect of other important administrative measures. I consider that the visit of the Prince of Wales is a singularly good opportunity to the people to show their disapproval of the present Government. After all, the visit is calculated to have tremendous political results. It is not to be a non-political event, and seeing that the Government of India and the Imperial Government want to make the visit a political event of first class importance, namely, for the purpose of strengthening their hold upon India, I for one, consider that it is the bounden duty of the people to boycott the visit which is being engineered by the two Governments in their own interest which at the present moment is totally antagonistic to the people."

"Do you mean that you want this boycott promoted because you feel that the strengthening of the hold upon India is not desirable in the best interests of the country?"—"Yes. The strengthening of the hold of a Government so wicked as the present one is not desirable for the best interests of the people. Not that I want the bond between England and

India to become loosened for the sake of loosening it but I want that bond to become strengthened only in so far as it adds to the welfare of India."

"Do you think that non-co-operation and the non-boycott of the Legislative Councils consistent?"—"No; because a person who takes up the programme of non-co-operation cannot consistently stand for Councils."

"Is non-co-operation, in your opinion, an end in itself or a means to an end, and if so, what is the end?"—"It is a means to an end, the end being to make the present Government just, whereas it has become mostly unjust. Co-operation with a just Government is a duty; non-co-operation with an unjust Government is equally a duty."

"Will you look with favour upon the proposal to enter the Councils and to carry on either obstructive tactics or to decline to take the oath of allegiance consistent with your non-co-operation?"—"No; as an accurate student of non-co-operation, I consider that such a proposal is inconsistent with the true spirit of non-co-operation. I have often said that a Government really thrives on obstruction and so far as the proposal not to take the oath of allegiance is concerned, I can really see no meaning in it; it amounts to a useless waste of valuable time and money."

"In other words, obstruction is no stage in non-co-operation?"—"No,"

"Are you satisfied that all efforts at constitutional agitation have been exhausted and that non-co-operation is the only course left for us?"—"I do not consider non-co-operation to be unconstitutional remedies now left open to us, non-co-operation is the only one left for us." "Do you consider it constitutional to adopt it with a view merely to paralyse Government?"—"Certainly, it is not unconstitutional, but a prudent man will not take all the steps that are constitutional if they are otherwise undesirable, nor do I advise that course. I am resorting to non-co-operation in progressive stages because I want to evolve true order out of untrue order. I am not going to take a single step in non-co-operation unless I am satisfied that the country is ready for that step, namely, non-co-operation will not be followed by anarchy or disorder."

"How will you satisfy yourself anarchy will not follow?"

"For instance, if I advise the police to lay down their arms, I shall have satisfied myself that we are able by voluntary assistance to protect ourselves against thieves and robbers. That was precisely what was done in Lahore and Amritsar last year by the citizens by means of volunteers

when the Military and the police had withdrawn. Even where Government had not taken such measures in a place, for want of adequate force, I know people have successfully protected themselves."

"You have advised lawyers to non-co-operate by suspending their practice. What is your experience? Has the lawyers' response to your appeal encouraged you to hope that you will be able to carry through all stages of non-co-operation with the help of such people?"

"I cannot say that a large number has yet responded to my appeal. It is too early to say how many will respond. But I may say that I do not rely merely upon the lawyer class or highly educated men to enable the Committee to carry out all the stages of non-co-operation. My hope lies more with the masses so far as the later stages of non-co-operation are concerned."

August 1920.

RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY FOR NON-CO-OPERATION

It is not without the greatest reluctance that I engage in a controversy with so learned a leader like Sir Narayan Chandavarkar. But in view of the fact that I am the author of the movement of non-co-operation, it becomes my painful duty to state my views even though they are opposed to those of the leaders whom I look upon with respect. I have just read during my travels in Malabar Sir Narayan's rejoinder to my answer to the Bombay manifesto against non-co-operation. I regret to have to say that the rejoinder leaves me unconvinced. He and I seem to read the teachings of the Bible, the Gita and the Quran from different standpoints or we put different interpretations on them. We seem to understand the words Ahimsa, politics and religion differently. I shall try my best to make clear my meaning of the common terms and my reading of the different religions.

At the outset let me assure Sir Narayan that I have not changed my views on Ahimsa. I still believe that man not having been given the power of creation does not possess the right of destroying the meanest creature that lives. The prerogative of destruction belongs solely to the creator of all that lives. I accept the interpretation of Ahimsa, namely, that it is not merely a negative State of harmlessness, but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary love, the active state of Ahimsa, requires you to resist the wrong-doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. Thus if my son lives a life of shame, I may

not help him to do so by continuing to support him; on the contrary, my love for him requires me to withdraw all support from him although it may mean even his death. And the same love imposes on me the obligation of welcoming him to my bosom when he repents. But I may not by physical force compel my son to become good. That in my opinion is the moral of the story of the Prodigal Son.

Non-co-operation is not a passive state, it is an intensely active state—more active than physical resistance or violence. Passive resistance is a misnomer. Non-co-operation in the sense used by me must be non-violent and therefore neither punitive nor vindictive nor based on malice ill-will or hatred. It follows therefore that it would be sin for me to serve General Dyer and co-operate with him to shoot innocent men. But it will be an exercise of forgiveness or love for me to nurse him back to life, if he was suffering from a physical malady. I cannot use in this context the word co-operation as Sir Narayan would perhaps use it. I would co-operate a thousand times with this Government to wean it from its career of crime but I will not for a single moment co-operate with it to continue that career. And I would be guilty of wrong doing if I retained a title from it or “a service under it or supported its law-courts or schools.” Better for me a beggar’s bowl than the richest possession from hands stained with the blood of the innocents of Jallianwala. Better by far a warrant of imprisonment than honeyed words from those who have wantonly wounded the religious sentiment of my seventy million brothers.

My reading of the Gita is diametrically opposed to Sir Narayan’s. I do not believe that the Gita teaches violence for doing good. It is pre-eminently a description of the duel that goes on in our own hearts. The divine author has used a historical incident for inculcating the lesson of doing one’s duty even at the peril of one’s life. It inculcates performance of duty irrespective of the consequences, for, we mortals, limited by our physical frames, are incapable of controlling actions save our own. The Gita distinguishes between the powers of light and darkness and demonstrates their incompatibility.

Jesus, in my humble opinion, was a prince among politicians. He did render unto Caesar that which was Caesar’s. He gave the devil his due. He ever shunned him and is reported never once to have yielded to his incantations. The politics of his time consisted in securing the welfare of the people by teaching them not to be seduced by the trinkets of the priests and the pharisees. The latter then controlled and moulded the life of the people. To-day the system of government is so devised as to affect every department of our life. It threatens our very existence. If therefore,

we want to conserve the welfare of the nation, we must religiously interest ourselves in the doing of the governors and exert a moral influence on them by insisting on their obeying the laws of morality. General Dyer did produce a 'moral effect' by an act of butchery. Those who are engaged in forwarding the movement of non-co-operation, hope to produce a moral effect by a process of self-denial, self-sacrifice and self-purification. It surprises me that Sir Narayan should speak of General Dyer's massacre in the same breath as acts of non-co-operation. I have done my best to understand his meaning, but I am sorry to confess that I have failed.

THE INWARDNESS OF NON-CO-OPERATION

I commend to the attention of the readers the thoughtful letter received from Miss Anne Marie Peterson. Miss Peterson is a lady who has been in India for some years and has closely followed Indian affairs. She is about to sever her connection with her mission for the purpose of giving herself to education that is truly national.

I have not given the letter in full. I have omitted all personal references. But her argument has been left entirely untouched. The letter was not meant to be printed. It was written just after my Vellore speech. But it being intrinsically important, I asked the writer for her permission, which she gladly gave, for printing it.

I publish it all the more gladly in that it enables me to show that the movement of non-co-operation is neither anti-Christian nor anti-English nor anti-European. It is a struggle between religion and irreligion, powers of light and powers of darkness.

It is my firm opinion that Europe to-day represents not the spirit of God or Christianity but the spirit of Satan. And Satan's successes are the greatest when he appears with the name of God on his lips. Europe is to-day only nominally Christian. In reality it is worshipping Mammon. 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom.' Thus really spoke Jesus Christ. His so-called followers measure their moral progress by their material possessions. The very national anthem of England is anti-Christian. Jesus who asked his followers to love their enemies even as themselves, could not have sung of his enemies, 'confound his enemies frustrate their knavish tricks.' The last book that Dr. Wallace wrote set forth his deliberate conviction that the much vaunted advance of science had added not an inch to the moral stature of Europe. The last war however has shown, as nothing else has, the Satanic nature of the civilization that dominates Europe to day. Every canon of public morality has been broken by the victors in the

name of virtue. No lie has been considered too foul to be uttered. The motive behind every crime is not religious or spiritual but grossly material. But the Mussalmans and the Hindus who are struggling against the Government have religion and honour as their motive. Even the cruel assassination which has just shocked the country is reported to have a religious motive behind it. It is certainly necessary to purge religion of its excrescences, but it is equally necessary to expose the hollowness of moral pretensions on the part of those who prefer material wealth to moral gain. It is easier to wean an ignorant fanatic from his error than a confirmed scoundrel from his scoundrelism.

This however is no indictment against individuals or even nations. Thousands of individual Europeans are rising above their environment. I write of the tendency in Europe as reflected in her present leaders. England through her leaders is insolently crushing Indian religious and national sentiment under her heels. England under the false plea of self-determination is trying to exploit the oil fields of Mesopotamia which she is almost to leave because she has probably no choice. France through her leaders is lending her name to training Cannibals as soldiers and is shamelessly betraying her trust as a mandatory power by trying to kill the spirit of the Syrians. President Wilson has thrown on the scrap heap his precious fourteen points.

It is this combination of evil forces which India is really fighting through non-violent non-cooperation. And those like Miss Peterson whether Christian or European, who feel that this error must be dethroned can exercise the privilege of doing so by joining the non-co-operation movement. With the honour of Islam is bound up the safety of religion itself and with the honour of India is bound up the honour of every nation known to be weak.

A MISSIONARY ON NON-CO-OPERATION

The following letter has been received by Mr. Gandhi from Miss Anne Marie Peterson of the Danish Mission in Madras:—

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I cannot thank you enough for your kindness and the way in which you received me and I feel that meeting more or less decided my future. I have thrown myself at the feet of India. At the same time I know that in Christ alone is my abode and I have no longing and no desire but to live Him, my crucified Saviour, and reveal Him for those with whom I come in contact. I just cling to his feet and pray with tears that I may not disgrace him as we Christians have been doing by our behaviour in India. We go

on crucifying Christ while we long to proclaim the Power of His resurrection by which He has conquered untruth and unrighteousness. If we who bear His name were true to Him, we would never bow ourselves before the Powers of this world, but we would always be on the side of the poor, the suffering and the oppressed. But we are not and therefore I feel myself under obligation and only to Christ but to India for His sake at this time of momentous importance for her future.

Truly it matters little what I, a lonely and insignificant person, may say or do. What is my protest against the common current, the race to which I belong is taking and (what grieves me more), which the missionary societies seem to follow? Even if a respectable number protested it would not be of any use. Yet were I alone against the whole world, I must follow my conscience and my God.

I, therefore, cannot but smile when I see people saying, you should have awaited the decision of the National Congress before starting the non-co-operation movement. You have a message for the country, and the Congress is the voice of the nation—its servant and not its master. A majority has no right simply because it is a majority.

But we must try to win the majority. And it is easy to see that now that Congress is going to be with you, Would it have done so if you had kept quiet and not lent your voice to the feelings of the people? Would the Congress have known its mind? I think not.

I myself was in much doubt before I heard you. But you convinced me. Not that I can feel much on the question of the Khilafat. I cannot. I can see what service you are doing to India, if you can prevent the Mahomedans from using the sword in order to take revenge and get their rights. I can see that if you unite the Hindus and the Mahomedans, it will be a master stroke. How I wish the Christian would also come forward and unite with you for the sake of their country and the honour not only of their Motherland but of Christ. I may not feel much for Turkey, but I feel for India, and I can see she (India) has no other way to protest against being trampled down and crushed than non-co-operation.

I also want you to know that many in Denmark and all over the world, yes, I am sure every true Christian, will feel with and be in sympathy with India in the struggle which is now going on. God forbid that in the struggle between might and right, truth and untruth, the spirit and the flesh, there should be a division of races. There is not. The same struggle is going on all over the world. What does it matter then that we are a few? God is on our side.

Brute force often seems to get the upper hand but righteousness

always has and always shall conquer, be it even through much suffering, and what may even appear to be a defeat. Christ conquered, when the world crucified Him. Blessed are the meek; they shall inherit the earth.

When I read your speech given at Madras it struck me that it should be printed as a pamphlet in English, Tamil, Hindustani and all the most used languages and then spread to every nook and corner of India.

The non-co-operation movement once started must be worked so as to become successful. If it is not, I dread to think of the consequences. But you cannot expect it to win in a day or two. It must take time and you will not despair if you do not reach your goal in a hurry. For those who have faith there is no haste.

Now for the withdrawal of the children and students from Government schools, I think, it a most important step. Taking the Government help (even if it be your money they pay you back), we must submit to its scheme, its rules and regulation. India and we who love her have come to the conclusion that the education the foreign Government has given you is not healthy for India and can certainly never make for her real growth. This movement would lead to a spontaneous rise of national schools. Let them be a few but let them spring up through self-sacrifice. Only by indigenous education can India be truly uplifted. Why this appeals so much to me is perhaps because I belong to the part of the Danish people who started their own independent, indigenous national schools. The Danish Free Schools and Folk-High-Schools, of which you may have heard, were started against the opposition and persecution of the State. The organisers won and thus have regenerated the nation. With my truly heartfelt thanks and prayers for you.

I am, Your sincerely, Anne Marie.

HOW TO WORK NON-CO-OPERATION

Perhaps the best way of answering the fears and criticism as to non-co-operation is to elaborate more fully the scheme of non-co-operation. The critics seem to imagine that the organisers propose to give effect to the whole scheme at once. The fact however is that the organisers have fixed definite, progressive four stages. The first is the giving up of titles and resignation of honorary posts. If there is no response or if the response received is not effective, recourse will be had to the second stage. The second stage involves much previous arrangement. Certainly not a single servant will be called out unless he is either capable of supporting himself and his dependents or the Khilafat Committee is able to bear the burden. All the classes of servants will not be called out at once and never will

any pressure be put upon a single servant to withdraw himself from the Government service. Nor will a single private employee be touched for the simple reason that the movement is not anti-English. It is not even anti-Government. Co-operation is to be withdrawn because the people must not be party to a wrong—a broken pledge—a violation of deep religious sentiment. Naturally, the movement will receive a check, if there is any undue influence brought to bear upon any Government servant or if any violence is used or countenanced by any member of the Khilafat Committee. The second stage must be entirely successful, if the response is at all on an adequate scale. For no Government much less the Indian Government can subsist if the people cease to serve it. The withdrawal, therefore, of the police and the military—the third stage—is a distant goal. The organisers however wanted to be fair, open and above suspicion. They did not want to keep back from the Government or the public a single step they had in contemplation even as a remote contingency. The fourth, *i.e.*, suspension of taxes is still more remote. The organisers recognise that suspension of general taxation is fraught with the greatest danger. It is likely to bring a sensitive class in conflict with the police. They are, therefore, not likely to embark upon it, unless they can do so with the assurance that there will be no violence offered by the people.

I admit as I have already done that non-co-operation is not unattended with risk, but the risk of supineness in the face of a grave issue is infinitely greater than the danger of violence ensuing from organizing non-co-operation. To do nothing is to invite violence for a certainty.

It is easy enough to pass resolutions or write articles condemning non-co-operation. But it is no easy task to restrain the fury of a people incensed by a deep sense of wrong. I urge those who talk or work against non-co-operation to descend from their chairs and go down to the people, learn their feelings and write, if they have the heart against non-co-operation. They will find, as I have found that the only way to avoid violence is to enable them to give such expression to their feelings as to compel redress. I have found nothing save non-co-operation. It is logical and harmless. It is the inherent right of a subject to refuse to assist a Government that will not listen to him.

Non-co-operation as a voluntary movement can only succeed, if the feeling is genuine and strong enough to make people suffer to the utmost. If the religious sentiment of the Mahomedans is deeply hurt and if the Hindus entertain neighbourly regard towards their Muslim brethren, they will both count no cost too great for achieving the end. Non-co-operation will not only be an effective remedy but will also be an effective test of

the sincerity of the Muslim claim and the Hindu profession of friendship.

There is however one formidable argument urged by friends against my joining the Khilafat movement. They say that it ill-becomes me, a friend of the English and an admirer of the British constitution, to join hands with those who are to-day filled with nothing but ill-will against the English. I am sorry to have to confess that the ordinary Mahomedan entertains to-day no affection for Englishmen. He considers, not without some cause, that they have not played the game. But if I am friendly towards Englishmen, I am no less so towards my countrymen, the Mahomedans. And as such they have a greater claim upon my attention than Englishmen. My personal religion however enables me to serve my countrymen without hurting Englishmen or for that matter anybody else. What I am not prepared to do to my blood-brother, I would not do to an Englishman, I would not injure him to gain a kingdom. But I would withdraw co-operation from him if it becomes necessary as I had withdrawn from my own brother (now deceased) when it became necessary. I serve the Empire by refusing to partake in its wrong. William Stead offered public prayers for British reverses at the time of the Boer war because he considered that the nation to which he belonged was engaged in an unrighteous war. The present Prime Minister risked his life in opposing that war and did everything he could to obstruct his own Government in its prosecution. And to-day if I have thrown in my lot with the Mahomedans, a large number of whom, bear no friendly feelings towards the British, I have done so frankly as a friend of the British and with the object of gaining justice and of thereby showing the capacity of the British constitution to respond to every honest determination when it is coupled with suffering, I hope by my 'alliance' with the Mahomedans to achieve a threefold end—to obtain justice in the face of odds with the method of Satyagrah and to show its efficacy over all other methods, to secure Mahomedan friendship for the Hindus and thereby internal peace also, and last but not the least to transform ill-will into affection for the British and their constitution which in spite of the imperfections weathered many a storm. I may fail in achieving any of the ends. I can but attempt. God alone can grant success. It will not be denied that the ends are all worthy. I invite Hindus and Englishman to join me in a full-hearted manner in shouldering the burden the Mahomedans of India are carrying. Theirs is admittedly a just fight. The Viceroy, the Secretary of State, the Maharaja of Bikaner and Lord Sinha have testified to it. Time has arrived to make good the testimony. People with a just cause are never satisfied with a mere protest. They have been known to die for it. Are a high-spirited

people like the Mahomedans expected to do less?

SPEECH AT MADRAS

Addressing a huge concourse of people of the city of Madras Hindus and Mahomedans numbering over 50,000, assembled on the South Beach opposite to the Presidency College, Madras, on the 12th August, 1920, Mahatma Gandhi spoke as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and Friends, Like last year, I have to ask your forgiveness that I should have to speak being seated. Whilst my voice has become stronger than it was last year, my body is still weak; and if I were to attempt to speak to you standing, I could not hold on for very many minutes before the whole frame would shake. I hope, therefore, that you will grant me permission to speak seated. I have sat here to address you on a most important question, probably a question whose importance we have not measured up to now.

LOKAMANYA TILAK

But before I approach that question on this dear old beach of Madras, you will expect me—you will want me—to offer my tribute to the great departed, Lokamanya Tilak Maharaj (loud and prolonged cheers). I would ask this great assembly to listen to me in silence. I have come to make an appeal to your hearts and to your reason and I could not do so unless you were prepared to listen to whatever I have to say in absolute silence. I wish to offer my tribute to the departed patriot and I think that I cannot do better than say that his death, as his life, has poured new vigour into the country. If you were present as I was present at that great funeral procession, you would realise with me the meaning of my words. Mr. Tilak lived for his country. The inspiration of his life was freedom for his country which he called Swaraj, the inspiration of his death-bed was also freedom for his country. And it was that which gave him such marvellous hold upon his countrymen; it was that which commanded the adoration not of a few chosen Indians belonging to the upper strata of society but of millions of his countrymen. His life was one long sustained piece of self-sacrifice. He began that life of discipline and self-sacrifice in 1879 and he continued that life up to the end of his day, and that was the secret of his hold upon his country. He not only knew what he wanted for his country but also how to live for his country and how to die for his country. I hope then that whatever I say this evening to this vast mass of people, will bear fruit in that same sacrifice for which the life of Lokamanya Tilak Maharaj stands. His life, if it teaches us anything whatsoever, teaches one supreme

lesson: that if we want to do anything whatsoever for our country we can do so not by speeches, however grand, eloquent and convincing they may be, but only by sacrifice at the back of every act of our life. I have come to ask everyone of you whether you are ready and willing to give sufficiently for your country's sake for country's honour and for religion. I have boundless faith in you, the citizens of Madras, and the people of this great presidency, a faith which I began to cultivate in the year 1903 when I first made acquaintance with the Tamil labourers in South Africa; and I hope that in these hours of our trial, this province will not be second to any other in India, and that it will lead in this spirit of self-sacrifice and will translate every word into action.

NEED FOR NON-CO-OPERATION

What is this non-co-operation about which you have heard so much, and why do we want to offer this non-co-operation? I wish to go for the time being into the why. Here are two things before this country: the first and the foremost is the Khilafat question. On this the heart of the Mussalmans of India has become lacerated. British pledges given after the greatest deliberation by the Prime Minister of England in the name of the English nation, have been dragged into the mire. The promises given to Moslem India on the strength of which, the consideration that was expected by the British nation was exacted, have been broken, and the great religion of Islam has been placed in danger. The Mussalmans hold and I venture to think they rightly hold that so long as British promises remain unfulfilled, so long is it impossible for them to tender whole-hearted fealty and loyalty to the British connection; and if it is to be a choice for a devout Mussalman between loyalty to the British connection and loyalty to his Code and Prophet, he will not require a second to make his choice, and he has declared his choice. The Mussalmans say frankly openly and honourably to the whole world that if the British Ministers and the British nation do not fulfil the pledges given to them and do not wish to regard with respect the sentiments of 70 millions of the inhabitants of India who profess the faith of Islam, it will be impossible for them to retain Islamic loyalty. It is a question, then for the rest of the Indian population to consider whether they want to perform a neighbourly duty by their Mussalman countrymen, and if they do, they have an opportunity of a lifetime which will not occur for another hundred years, to show their good-will, fellowship and friendship and to prove what they have been saying for all these long years that the Mussalman is the brother of the Hindu. If the Hindu regards that before the connection with the British

nation comes his natural connection with his Moslem brother, then I say to you that if you find that the Moslem claim is just, that it is based upon real sentiment, and that at its back ground is this great religious feeling, you cannot do otherwise than help the Mussalman through and through, so long as their cause remains just, and the means for attaining the end remains equally just, honourable and free from harm to India. These are the plain conditions which the Indian Mussalmans have accepted; and it was when they saw that they could accept the proffered aid of the Hindus, that they could always justify the cause and the means before the whole world, that they decided to accept the proffered hand of fellowship. It is then for the Hindus and Mahomedans to offer a united front to the whole of the Christian powers of Europe and tell them that weak as India is, India has still got the capacity of preserving her self-respect, she still knows how to die for her religion and for her self-respect.

That is the Khilafat in a nut-shell; but you have also got the Punjab. The Punjab has wounded the heart of India as no other question has for the past century. I do not exclude from my calculation the Mutiny of 1857. Whatever hardships India had to suffer during the Mutiny, the insult that was attempted to be offered to her during the passage of the Rowlatt legislation and that which was offered after its passage were unparalleled in Indian history. It is because you want justice from the British nation in connection with the Punjab atrocities: you have to devise ways and means as to how you can get this justice. The House of Commons, the House of Lords, Mr. Montagu, the Viceroy of India, everyone of them know what the feeling of India is on this Khilafat question and on that of the Punjab; the debates in both the Houses of Parliament, the action of Mr. Montagu and that of the Viceroy have demonstrated to you completely that they are not willing to give the justice which is India's due and which she demands. I suggest that our leaders have got to find a way out of this great difficulty and unless we have made ourselves even with the British rulers in India and unless we have gained a measure of self-respect at the hands of the British rulers in India, no connection, and no friendly intercourse is possible between them and ourselves. I, therefore, venture to suggest this beautiful and unanswerable method of non-co-operation.

IS IT UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

I have been told that non-co-operation is unconstitutional. I venture to deny that it is unconstitutional. On the contrary, I hold that non-co-operation is a just and religious doctrine; it is the inherent right of every human being and it is perfectly constitutional. A great lover of the British

Empire has said that under the British constitution even a successful rebellion is perfectly constitutional and he quotes historical instances, which I cannot deny, in support of his claim. I do not claim any constitutionality for a rebellion successful or otherwise, so long as that rebellion means in the ordinary sense of the term, what it does mean namely wresting justice by violent means. On the contrary, I have said it repeatedly to my countrymen that violence whatever end it may serve in Europe, will never serve us in India. My brother and friend Shaukat Ali believes in methods of violence; and if it was in his power to draw the sword against the British Empire, I know that he has got the courage of a man and he has got also the wisdom to see that he should offer that battle to the British Empire. But because he recognises as a true soldier that means of violence are not open to India, he sides with me accepting my humble assistance and pledges his word that so long as I am with him and so long as he believes in the doctrine, so long will he not harbour even the idea of violence against any single Englishman or any single man on earth. I am here to tell you that he has been as true as his word and has kept it religiously. I am here to bear witness that he has been following out this plan of non-violent Non-co-operation to the very letter and I am asking India to follow this non-violent non-co-operation. I tell you that there is not a better soldier living in our ranks in British India than Shaukat Ali. When the time for the drawing of the sword comes, if it ever comes, you will find him drawing that sword and you will find me retiring to the jungles of Hindustan. As soon as India accepts the doctrine of the sword, my life as an Indian is finished. It is because I believe in a mission special to India and it is because I believe that the ancients of India after centuries of experience have found out that the true thing for any human being on earth is not justice based on violence but justice based on sacrifice of self, justice based on Yagna and Kurbanî, I cling to that doctrine and I shall cling to it for ever, it is for that reason I tell you that whilst my friend believes also in the doctrine of violence and has adopted the doctrine of non-violence as a weapon of the weak, I believe in the doctrine of non-violence as a weapon of the strongest. I believe that a man is the strongest soldier for daring to die unarmed with his breast bare before the enemy. So much for the non-violent part of non-co-operation. I therefore, venture to suggest to my learned countrymen that so long as the doctrine of non-co-operation remains non-violent, so long there is nothing unconstitutional in that doctrine.

I ask further, is it unconstitutional for me to say to the British Government 'I refuse to serve you?' Is it unconstitutional for our worthy

Chairman to return with every respect all the titles that he has ever held from the Government? Is it unconstitutional for any parent to withdraw his children from a Government or aided school? Is it unconstitutional for a lawyer to say 'I shall no longer support the arm of the law so long as that arm of law is used not to raise me but to debase me'? Is it unconstitutional for a civil servant or for a judge to say, 'I refuse to serve a Government which does not wish to respect the wishes of the whole people?' I ask, is it unconstitutional for a policeman or for a soldier to tender his resignation when he knows that he is called to serve a Government which traduces his own countrymen? Is it unconstitutional for me to go to the 'krishan,' to the agriculturist, and say to him 'it is not wise for you to pay any taxes if these taxes are used by the Government not to raise you but to weaken you?' I hold and I venture to submit, that there is nothing unconstitutional in it. What is more, I have done every one of these things in my life and nobody has questioned the constitutional character of it. I was in Kaira working in the midst of 7 lakhs of agriculturists. They had all suspended the payment of taxes and the whole of India was at one with me. Nobody considered that it was unconstitutional. I submit that in the whole plan of non-co-operation, there is nothing unconstitutional. But I do venture to suggest that it will be highly unconstitutional in the midst of this unconstitutional Government, in the midst of a nation which has built up its magnificent constitution, for the people of India to become weak and to crawl on their belly, it will be highly unconstitutional for the people of India to pocket every insult that is offered to them; it is highly unconstitutional for the 70 millions of Mohamedans of India to submit to a violent wrong done to their religion; it is highly unconstitutional for the whole of India to sit still and co-operate with an unjust Government which has trodden under its feet the honour of the Punjab. I say to my countrymen so long as you have a sense of honour and so long as you wish to remain the descendants and defenders of the noble traditions that have been handed to you for generations after generations, it is unconstitutional for you not to non-co-operate and unconstitutional for you to co-operate with a Government which has become so unjust as our Government has become. I am not anti-English; I am not anti-British; I am not anti any Government; but I am anti-untruth, anti-humbug and anti-injustice. So long as the Government spells injustice, it may regard me as its enemy, implacable enemy. I had hoped at the Congress at Amritsar—I am speaking God's truth before you—when I pleaded on bended knees before some of you for co-operation with the Government. I had full hope that the British

ministers who are wise, as a rule, would placate the Mussalman sentiment that they would do full justice in the matter of the Punjab atrocities; and therefore, I said: "let us return good-will to the hand of fellowship that has been extended to us, which I then believed was extended to us through the Royal Proclamation." It was on that account that I pleaded for co-operation. But to-day that faith having gone and obliterated by the acts of the British ministers, I am here to plead not for futile obstruction in the Legislative council but for real substantial non-co-operation which would paralyse the mightiest Government on earth. That is what I stand for to-day. Until we have wrung justice, and until we have wrung our self-respect from unwilling hands and from unwilling pens there can be no co-operation. Our Shastras say and I say so with the greatest deference to all the greatest religious preceptors of India but without fear of contradiction, that our Shastras teach us that there shall be no co-operation between injustice and justice, between an unjust man and a justice-loving man, between truth and untruth. Co-operation is a duty only so long as Government protects your honour, and non-co-operation is an equal duty when the Government instead of protecting robs you of your honour. That is the doctrine of non-co-operation.

NON-CO-OPERATION AND THE SPECIAL CONGRESS

I have been told that I should have waited for the declaration of the special Congress which is the mouth piece of the whole nation. I know that it is the mouthpiece of the whole nation. If it was for me, individual Gandhi, to wait, I would have waited for eternity. But I had in my hands a sacred trust. I was advising my Mussalman countrymen and for the time being I hold their honour in my hands. I dare not ask them to wait for any verdict but the verdict of their own Conscience. Do you suppose that Mussalmans can eat their own words, can withdraw from the honourable position they have taken up? If perchance, and God forbid that it should happen, the Special Congress decides against them, I would still advise my countrymen the Mussalmans to stand single handed and fight rather than yield to the attempted dishonour to their religion. It is, therefore, given to the Mussalmans to go to the Congress on bended knees and plead for support. But support or no support, it was not possible for them to wait for the Congress to give them the lead. They had to choose between futile violence, drawing of the naked sword and peaceful non-violent but effective non-co-operation, and they have made their choice. I venture further to say to you that if there is any body of men who feel as I do, the sacred character of non-co-operation, it is for you and me not to

wait for the Congress but to act and to make it impossible for the Congress to give any other verdict. After all what is the Congress? The Congress is the collected voice of individuals who form it, and if the individuals go to the Congress with a united voice, that will be the verdict you will gain from the Congress. But if we go to the Congress with no opinion because we have none or because we are afraid to express it, then naturally we wait the verdict of the Congress. To those who are unable to make up their mind I say by all means wait. But for those who have seen the clear light as they see the lights in front of them, for them to wait is a sin. The Congress does not expect you to wait but it expects you to act so that the Congress can gauge properly the national feeling. So much for the Congress.

BOYCOTT OF THE COUNCILS

Among the details of non-co-operation I have placed in the foremost rank the boycott of the councils. Friends have quarrelled with me for the use of the word boycott, because I have disapproved, as I disapprove even now, boycott of British goods or any goods for that matter. But there, boycott has its own meaning and here boycott has its own meaning. I not only do not disapprove but approve of the boycott of the councils that are going to be formed next year. And why do I do it? The people, the masses require from us, the leaders, a clear lead. They do not want any equivocation from us. The suggestion that we should seek election and then refuse to take the oath of allegiance, would only make the nation distrust the leaders. It is not a clear lead to the nation. So I say to you, my countrymen, not to fall into this trap. We shall sell our country by adopting the method of seeking election and then not taking the oath of allegiance. We may find it difficult, and I frankly confess to you that I have not that trust in so many Indians making that declaration and standing by it. To-day I suggest to those who honestly hold the view—*viz.* that we should seek election and then refuse to take the oath of allegiance. I suggest to them that they will fall into a trap which they are preparing for themselves and for the nation. That is my view. I hold that if we want to give the nation the clearest possible lead, and if we want not to play with this great nation we must make it clear to this nation that we cannot take any favours, no matter how great they may be so long as those favours are accompanied by an injustice a double wrong, done to India not yet redressed. The first indispensable thing before we can receive any favours from them is that they should redress this double wrong. There is a Greek proverb which used to say “Beware of the Greek but especially beware

of them when they bring gifts to you." To-day from those ministers who are bent upon perpetuating the wrong to Islam and to the Punjab, I say we cannot accept gifts but we should be doubly careful lest we may not fall into the trap that they may have devised. I therefore suggest that we must not coquet with the council and must not have anything whatsoever to do with them. I am told that if we, who represent the national sentiment do not seek election, the Moderates who do not represent that sentiment will. I do not agree. I do not know what the Moderates represent and I do not know what the Nationalists represent. I know that there are good sheep and black sheep amongst the Moderates. I know that there are good sheep and black sheep amongst the Nationalists. I know that many Moderates hold honestly the view that it is a sin to resort to non-co-operation. I respectfully agree to differ from them. I do say to them also that they will fall into a trap which they will have devised if they seek election. But that does not affect my situation. If I feel in my heart of hearts that I ought not to go to the councils I ought at least to abide by this decision and it does not matter if ninety-nine other countrymen seek election. That is the only way in which public work can be done, and public opinion can be built. That is the only way in which reforms can be achieved and religion can be conserved. If it is a question of religious honour, whether I am one or among many I must stand upon my doctrine. Even if I should die in the attempt, it is worth dying for, than that I should live and deny my own doctrine. I suggest that it will be wrong on the part of any one to seek election to these Councils. If once we feel that we cannot co-operate with this Government, we have to commence from the top. We are the natural leaders of the people and we have acquired the right and the power to go to the nation and speak to it with the voice of non-co-operation. I, therefore, do suggest that it is inconsistent with non-co-operation to seek election to the Councils on any terms whatsoever.

LAWYERS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

I have suggested another difficult matter, *viz.*, that the lawyers should suspend their practice. How should I do otherwise knowing so well how the Government had always been able to retain this power through the instrumentality of lawyers. It is perfectly true that it is the lawyers of to-day who are leading us, who are fighting the country's battles, but when it comes to a matter of action against the Government, when it comes to a matter of paralysing the activity of the Government I know that the Government always look to the lawyers, however, fine fighters they may have been to preserve their dignity and their self-respect. I, therefore,

suggest to my lawyer friends that it is their duty to suspend their practice and to show to the Government that they will no longer retain their offices, because lawyers are considered to be honorary officers of the courts and therefore subject to their disciplinary jurisdiction. They must no longer retain these honorary offices if they want to withdraw on operation from Government. But what will happen to law and order? We shall evolve law and order through the instrumentality of these very lawyers. We shall promote arbitration courts and dispense justice, pure, simple home-made justice, swadeshi justice to our countrymen. That is what suspension of practice means.

PARENTS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

I have suggested yet another difficulty to withdraw our children from the Government schools and to ask collegiate students to withdraw from the College and to empty Government aided schools. How could I do otherwise? I want to gauge the national sentiment. I want to know whether the Mahomedans feel deeply. If they feel deeply they will understand in the twinkling of an eye, that it is not right for them to receive schooling from a Government in which they have lost all faith; and which they do not trust at all. How can I, if I do not want to help this Government, receive any help from that Government. I think that the schools and colleges are factories for making clerks and Government servants. I would not help this great factory for manufacturing clerks and servants if I want to withdraw co-operation from that Government. Look at it from any point of view you like. It is not possible for you to send your children to the schools and still believe in the doctrine of non-co-operation.

THE DUTY OF TITLE HOLDERS

I have gone further. I have suggested that our title holders should give up their titles. How can they hold on to the titles and honour bestowed by the Government? They were at one time badges of honours when we believed that national honour was safe in their hands. But now they are no longer badges of honour but badges of dishonour and disgrace when we really believe that we cannot get justice from this Government. Every title holder holds his titles and honours as trustee for the nation and in this first step in the withdrawal of co-operation from the Government they should surrender their titles without a moment's consideration. I suggest to my Mahomedan countrymen that if they fail in this primary duty they will certainly fail in non-co-operation unless the masses

themselves reject the classes and take up non-co-operation in their own hands and are able to fight that battle even as the men of the French Revolution were able to take the reins of Government in their own hands leaving aside the leaders and marched to the banner of victory. I want no revolution. I want ordered progress. I want no disordered order. I want no chaos. I want real order to be evolved out of this chaos which is misrepresented to me as order. If it is order established by a tyrant in order to get hold of the tyrannical reins of Government I say that it is no order for me but it is disorder. I want to evolve justice out of this injustice. Therefore, I suggest to you the passive non-co-operation. If we would only realise the secret of this peaceful and infallible doctrine you will know and you will find that you will not want to use even an angry word when they lift the sword at you and you will not want even to lift your little finger, let alone a stick or a sword.

NON-CO-OPERATION—SERVICE TO THE EMPIRE

You may consider that I have spoken these words in anger because I have considered the ways of this Government immoral, unjust, debasing and untruthful. I use these adjectives with the greatest deliberation. I have used them for my own true brother with whom I was engaged in battle of non-co-operation for full 13 years and although the ashes cover the remains of my brother I tell you that I used to tell him that he was unjust when his plans were based upon immoral foundation. I used to tell him that he did not stand for truth. There was no anger in me, I told him this home truth because I loved him. In the same manner, I tell the British people that I love them, and that I want their association but I want that association on conditions well defined. I want my self-respect and I want my absolute equality with them. If I cannot gain that equality from the British people, I do not want that British connection. If I have to let the British people go and import temporary disorder and dislocation of national business, I will favour that disorder and dislocation than that I should have injustice from the hands of a great nation such as the British nation. You will find that by the time the whole chapter is closed that the successors of Mr. Montagu will give me the credit for having rendered the most distinguished service that I have yet rendered to the Empire, in having offered this non-co-operation and in having suggested the boycott, not of His Royal Highness the prince of Wales, but of boycott of a visit engineered by Government in order to tighten its hold on the national neck. I will not allow it even if I stand alone. If I cannot persuade this nation not to welcome that visit but will boycott that visit with all the

power at my command. It is for that reason I stand before you and implore you to offer this religious battle, but it is not a battle offered to you by a visionary or a saint. I deny being a visionary. I do not accept the claim of saintliness. I am of the earth, earthy, a common gardener man as much as any one of you, probably much more than you are. I am prone to as many weaknesses as you are. But I have seen the world. I have lived in the world with my eyes open. I have gone through the most fiery ordeals that have fallen to the lot of man. I have gone through this discipline. I have understood the secret of my own sacred Hinduism. I have learnt the lesson that non-co-operation is the duty not merely of the saint but it is the duty of every ordinary citizen, who not know much, not caring to know much but wants to perform his ordinary household functions. The people of Europe touch even their masses, the poor people the doctrine of the sword. But the Rishis of India, those who have held the tradition of India have preached to the masses of India this doctrine, not of the sword, not of violence but of suffering, of self-suffering. And unless you and I am prepared to go through this primary lesson we are not ready even to offer the sword and that is the lesson my brother Shaukat Ali has imbibed to teach and that is why he to-day accepts my advice tendered to him in all prayerfulness and in all humility and says 'long live non-co-operation.' Please remember that even in England the little children were withdrawn from the schools; and colleges in Cambridge and Oxford were closed. Lawyers had left their desks and were fighting in the trenches. I do not present to you the trenches but I do ask you to go through the sacrifice that the men, women and the brave lads of England went through. Remember that you are offering battle to a nation which is saturated with their spirit of sacrifice whenever the occasion arises. Remember that the little band of Boers offered stubborn resistance to a mighty nation. But their lawyers had left their desks. Their mothers had withdrawn their children from the schools and colleges and the children had become the volunteers of the nation, I have seen them with these naked eyes of mine. I am asking my countrymen in India to follow no other gospel than the gospel of self-sacrifice which precedes every battle. Whether you belong to the school of violence or non-violence you will still have to go through the fire of sacrifice, and of discipline. May God grant you, may God grant our leaders the wisdom, the courage and the true knowledge to lead the nation to its cherished goal. May God grant the people of India the right path, the true vision and the ability and the courage to follow this path, difficult and yet easy, of sacrifice.

SPEECH AT TRICHINOPOLY

Mahatma Gandhi made the following speech at Trichinopoly on the 18th August, 1920:—

I thank you on behalf of my brother Shaukat Ali and myself for the magnificent reception that the citizens of Trichinopoly have given to us. I thank you also for the many addresses that you have been good enough to present to us, but I must come to business.

It is a great pleasure to me to renew your acquaintance for reasons that I need not give you. I expect great things from Trichinopoly, Madura and a few places I could name. I take it that you have read my address on the Madras Beach on non-co-operation. Without taking up your time in this great assembly, I wish to deal with one or two matters that arise out of Mr. S. Kasturiranga Iyengar's speech. He says in effect that I should have waited for the Congress mandate on Non-co-operation. That was impossible, because the Mussalmans had and still have a duty, irrespective of the Hindus, to perform in reference to their own religion. It was impossible for them to wait for any mandate, save the mandate of their own religion in a matter that vitally concerned the honour of Islam. It is, therefore, possible for them only to go to the Congress on bended knees with a clear cut programme of their own and ask the Congress to pronounce its blessings upon that programme and if they are not so fortunate as to secure the blessings of the National Assembly without meaning any disrespect to that assembly, it is their bounden duty to go on with their programme, and so it is the duty of every Hindu who considers his Mussalman brother as a brother who has a just cause which he wishes to vindicate, to throw in his lot with his Mussalman brother. Our leader does not quarrel with the principle of non-co-operation by itself, but he objects to the three principal details of non-co-operation.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

He considers that it is our duty to seek election to the Councils and fight our battle on the floor of the Council hall. I do not deny the possibility of a fight and a royal fight on the Council floor. We have done it for the last 35 years, but I venture to suggest to you and to him, with all due respect, that it is not non-co-operation and it is not half as successful as non-co-operation can be. You cannot go to a class of people with a view to convince them by any fight, call it even obstruction, who have got a settled conviction and a settled policy to follow. It is in medical language

an incompatible mixture out of which you can gain nothing, but if you totally boycott the Council, you create a public opinion in the country with reference to the Khilafat wrong and the Punjab wrong which will become totally irresistible. The first advantage of going to the Councils must be good-will on the part of the rulers. It is absolutely lacking. In the place of good-will you have got nothing but injustice but I must move on.

LAWYERS' PRACTICE

I come now to the second objection of Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar with reference to the suspension by lawyers of their practice. Milk is good in itself but it comes absolutely poisonous immediately a little bit of arsenic is added to it. Law courts are similarly good when justice is distilled through them on behalf of a Sovereign power which wants to do justice to its people. Law courts are one of the greatest symbols of power and in the battle of non-co-operation, you may not leave law courts untouched and claim to offer non-co-operation, but if you will read that objection carefully, you will find in that objection the great fear that the lawyers will not respond to the call that the country makes upon them, and it is just there that the beauty of non-co-operation comes in. If one lawyer alone suspends practice, it is so much to the good of the country and so if we are sure to deprive the Government of the power that it possesses through its law courts, whether one lawyer takes it up or many, we must adopt that step.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

He objects also to the plan of boycotting Government schools. I can only say what I have said with reference to lawyers that if we mean non-co-operation, we may not receive any favours from the Government, no matter how advantageous by themselves they may be. In a great struggle like this, it is not open to us to count how many schools will respond and how many parents will respond and just as a geometrical problem is difficult, because it does not admit of easy proof, so also because a certain stage in national evolution is difficult, you may not avoid that step without making the whole of the evolution a farce.

We have had a great lesson in non-co-operation and co-operation. We had a lesson in non-co-operation when some young men began to fight there and it is a dangerous weapon. I have not the slightest doubt about it. One man with a determined will to non-co-operate can disturb a whole meeting and we had a physical demonstration of it tonight but ours is non-violent, non-co-operation in which there can be no mistake

whatsoever in the fundamental conditions are observed. If non-co-operation fails, it will not be for want of any inherent strength in it, but it will fall because there is no response to it, or because people have not sufficiently grasped its simple principles. You had also a practical demonstration of co-operation just now; that heavy chair went over the heads of so many people, because all wanted to lift their little hand to move that chair away from them and so was that heavier dome also removed from our sight by co-operation of man, woman and child. Everybody believes and knows that this Government of ours exists only by the co-operation of the people and not by the force of arms it can wield and everyman with a sense of logic will tell you that the converse of that also is equally true that Government cannot stand if this co-operation on which it exists is withdrawn. Difficulties undoubtedly there are, we have hitherto learned how to sacrifice our voice and make speeches. We must also learn to sacrifice ease, money, comfort and that, we may learn from the Englishmen themselves. Every one who has studied English history knows that we are now engaged in a battle with a nation which is capable of great sacrifice and the three hundred millions of Indians cannot make their mark upon the world, or gain their self-respect without an adequate measure of sacrifice.

BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS

Our friend has suggested the boycott of British or foreign goods. Boycott of all foreign goods is another name for Swadeshi. He thinks that there will be a greater response in the boycott of all foreign goods. With the experience of years behind me and with an intimate knowledge of the mercantile classes, I venture to tell you that boycott of foreign goods, or boycott of merely British goods is more impracticable than any of the steps I have suggested. Whereas in all the steps that I have ventured to suggest there is practically no sacrifice of money involved, in the boycott of British or foreign goods you are inviting your merchant princes to sacrifice their millions. It has got to be done, but it is an exceedingly low process. The same may be said of the steps that I have ventured to suggest, I know, but boycott of goods is conceived as a punishment and the punishment is only effective when it is inflicted. What I have ventured to suggest is not a punishment, but the performance of a sacred duty, a measure of self-denial from ourselves, and therefore it is effective from its very inception when it is undertaken even by one man and a substantial duty performed even by one single man lays the foundation of nations liberty.

CONCLUSION

I am most anxious for my nation, for my Mussalman brethren also, to understand that if they want to vindicate national honour or the honour of Islam, it will be vindicated without a shadow of doubt, not by conceiving a punishment or a series of punishments, but by an adequate measure of self-sacrifice. I wish to speak of all our leaders in terms of the greatest respect, but whatever respect we wish to pay them may not stop or arrest the progress of the country, and I am most anxious that the country at this very critical period of its history should make its choice. The choice clearly does not lie before you and me in wresting by force of arms the sceptre from the British nation, but the choice lies in suffering this double wrong of the Khilafat and the Punjab, in pocketing humiliation and in accepting national emasculation or vindication of India's honour by sacrifice to-day by every man, woman and child and those who feel convinced of the rightness of things, we should make that choice to-night. So, citizens of Trichinopoly, you may not wait for the whole of India but you can enforce the first step of non-co-operation and begin your operations even from to-morrow, if you have not done so already. You can surrender all your titles to-morrow all the lawyers may surrender their practice to-morrow; those who cannot sustain body and soul by any other means can be easily supported by the Khilafat Committee, if they will give their whole time and attention to the work of that Committee and if the lawyers will kindly do that, you will find that there is no difficulty in settling your disputes by private arbitration. You can nationalise your schools from to-morrow if you have got the will and the determination. It is difficult, I know, when only a few of you think these things. It is as easy as we are sitting here when the whole of this vast audience is of one mind and as it was easy for you to carry that chair, so it is easy for you to enforce this programme from to-morrow if you have one will, one determination and love for your country, love for the honour of your country and religion. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

SPEECH AT CALICUT

Mr. Chairman and friends, On behalf of my brother Shaukut Ali and myself I wish to thank you most sincerely for the warm welcome you have extended to us. Before I begin to explain the purpose of our mission I have to give you the information that Pir Mahboob Shah who was being tried in Sindh for sedition has been sentenced to two years' simple imprisonment. I do not know exactly what the offence was with which the Pir was charged. I do not know whether the words attributed to him

were ever spoken by him. But I do know that the Pirsahab declined to offer any defence and with perfect resignation he has accepted his penalty. For me it is a matter of sincere pleasure that the Pirsahab who exercises great influence over his followers has understood the spirit of the struggle upon which we have embarked. It is not by resisting the authority of Government that we expect to succeed in the great task before us. But I do expect that we shall succeed if we understand the spirit of non-co-operation. The Lieutenant-Governor of Burma himself has told us that the British retain their hold on India not by the force of arms but by the force of co-operation of the people. Thus he has given us the remedy for any wrong that the Government may do to the people, whether knowingly or unknowingly. And so long as we co-operate with the Government, so long as we support that Government, we become to that extent sharers in the wrong. I admit that in ordinary circumstances a wise subject will tolerate the wrongs of a Government, but a wise subject never tolerates a wrong that a Government imposes on the declared will of a people. And I venture to submit to this great meeting that the Government of India and the Imperial Government have done a double wrong to India, and if we are a nation of self-respecting people conscious of its dignity, conscious of its right, it is not just and proper that we should stand the double humiliation that the Government has heaped upon us. By shaping and by becoming a predominant partner in the peace terms imposed on the helpless Sultan of Turkey, the Imperial Government have intentionally flouted the cherished sentiment of the Mussalman subjects of the Empire. The present Prime Minister gave a deliberate pledge after consultation with his colleagues when it was necessary for him to conciliate the Mussalmans of India. I claim to have studied this Khilafat question in a special manner. I claim to understand the Mussalman feeling on the Khilafat question and I am here to declare for the tenth time that on the Khilafat matter the Government has wounded the Mussalman sentiment as they had never done before. And I say without fear of contradiction that if the Mussalmans of India had not exercised great self-restraint and if there was not the gospel of non-co-operation preached to them and if they had not accepted it, there would have been bloodshed in India by this time. I am free to confess that spilling of blood would not have availed their cause. But a man who is in a state of rage whose heart has become lacerated does not count the cost of his action. So much for the Khilafat wrong.

I propose to take you for a minute to the Punjab, the northern end of India. And what have both Governments done for the Punjab? I am free

to confess again that the crowds in Amritsar went mad for a moment. They were goaded to madness by a wicked administration. But no madness on the part of a people can justify the shedding of innocent blood, and what have they paid for it? I venture to submit that no civilised Government could ever have made the people pay the penalty and retribution that they have paid. Innocent men were tried through mock-tribunals and imprisoned for life. Amnesty granted to them after; I count of no consequence. Innocent, unarmed men, who knew nothing of what was to happen, were butchered in cold blood without the slightest notice. Modesty of women in Manianwalla, women who had done no wrong to any individual, was outraged by insolent officers. I want you to understand what I mean by outrage of their modesty. Their veils were opened with his stick by an officer. Men who were declared to be utterly innocent by the Hunter Committee were made to crawl on their bellies. And all these wrongs totally undeserved remain unavenged. If it was the duty of the Government of India to punish those who were guilty of incendiarism and murder, as I hold it was their duty, it was doubly their duty to punish officers who insulted and oppressed innocent people. But in the face of these official wrongs we have the debate in the house of lords supporting official terrorism, it is this double wrong, the affront to Islam and the injury to the manhood of the Punjab, that we feel bound to wipe out by non-co-operation. We have prayed, petitioned, agitated, we have passed resolutions. Mr. Mahomed Ali supported by his friends is now waiting on the British public. He has pleaded the cause of Islam in a most manful manner, but his pleading has fallen on deaf ears and we have his word for it that whilst France and Italy have shown great sympathy for the cause of Islam, it is the British Ministers who have shown no sympathy. This shows which way the British Ministers and the present holders of office in India mean to deal by the people. There is no goodwill, there is no desire to placate the people of India. The people of India must therefore have a remedy to redress the double wrong. The method of the west is violence. Wherever the people of the west have felt a wrong either justly or unjustly, they have rebelled and shed blood. As I have said in my letter to the Viceroy of India, half of India does not believe in the remedy of violence. The other half is too weak to offer it. But the whole of India is deeply hurt and stirred by this wrong, and it is for that reason that I have suggested to the people of India the remedy of non-co-operation. I consider it perfectly harmless, absolutely constitutional and yet perfectly efficacious. It is a remedy in which, if it is properly adopted, victory is certain, and it is the age-old remedy of self-sacrifice. Are the Mussalmans

of India who feel the great wrong done to Islam ready to make an adequate self-sacrifice? All the scriptures of the world teach us that there can be no compromise between justice and injustice. Co-operation on the part of a justice-loving man with an unjust man is a crime. And if we desire to compel this great Government to the will of the people, as we must, we must adopt this great remedy of non-co-operation. And if the Mussalmans of India offer non-co-operation to Government in order to secure justice in the Khilafat matter, I believe it is duty of the Hindus to help them so long as their moans are just. I consider the eternal friendship between the Hindus and Mussalmans is more important than the British connection. I would prefer any day anarchy and chaos in India to an armed peace brought about by the bayonet between the Hindus and Mussalmans. I have therefore ventured to suggest to my Hindu brethren that if they wanted to live at peace with Mussalmans, there is an opportunity which is not going to recur for the next hundred years. And I venture to assure you that if the Government of India and the Imperial Government come to know that there is a determination on the part of the people to redress this double wrong they would not hesitate to do what is needed. But the Mussalmans of India will have to take the lead in the matter. You will have to commence the first stage of non-co-operation in right earnest. And if you may not help this Government, you may not receive help from it. Titles which were the other day titles of honour are to-day in my opinion badges of our disgrace. We must, therefore, surrender all titles of honour, all honorary offices. It will constitute an emphatic demonstration of the disapproval by the leaders of the people of the acts of the Government. Lawyers must suspend their practice and must resist the power of the Government which has chosen to flout public opinion. Nor may we receive instruction from schools controlled by Government and aided by it. Emptying of the schools will constitute a demonstration of the will of the middle class of India. It is far better for the nation even to neglect the literary instruction of the children than to co-operate with a Government that has striven to maintain an injustice and untruth on the Khilafat and Punjab matters. Similarly have I ventured to suggest a complete boycott of reformed councils. That will be an emphatic declaration of the part of the representatives of the people that they do not desire to associate with the Government so long as the two wrongs continue. We must equally decline to offer ourselves as recruits for the police or the military. It is impossible for us to go to Mesopotamia or to offer to police that country or to offer military assistance and to help the Government in that blood guiltiness. The last plank in the first stage is Swadeshi. Swadeshi is intended not so much to

bring pressure upon the Government as to demonstrate the capacity for sacrifice on the part of the men and women of India. When one-fourth of India has its religion at stake and when the whole of India has its honour at stake, we can be in no mood to bedeck ourselves with French calico or silks from Japan. We must resolve to be satisfied with cloth woven by the humble weavers of India in their own cottages out of yarn spun by their sisters in their own homes. When a hundred years ago our tastes were not debased and we were not lured by all the fineries from the foreign countries, we were satisfied with the cloth produced by the men and women in India, and if I could but in a moment revolutionize the tastes of India and make it return to its original simplicity, I assure you that the Gods would descent to rejoice at the great act of renunciation. That is the first stage in non-co-operation. I hope it is as easy for you as it is easy for me to see that if India is capable of taking the first step in anything like a full measure that step will bring the redress we want. I, therefore, do not intend to take you to the other stages of non-co-operation. I would like you to rivet your attention upon the plans in the first stage. You will have noticed that but two things are necessary in going through the first stage: (1) Perfect spirit of non-violence is indispensable for non-co-operation, (2) only a little self-sacrifice, I pray to God that He will give the people of India sufficient courage and wisdom and patience to go through this experiment of non-co-operation. I thank you for the great reception that you have given us. And I also thank you for the great patience and exemplary silence with which you have listened to my remarks.

August 1920.

SPEECH AT MANGALORE

Mr. Chairman and friends, To my brother Shaukat Ali and me, it was a pleasure to go through this beautiful garden of India. The great reception that you gave us this afternoon, and this great assembly are most welcome to us, if they are a demonstration of your sympathy with the cause which you have the honour to represent. I assure you that we have not undertaken this incessant travelling in order to have receptions and addresses, no matter how cordial they may be. But we have undertaken this travelling throughout the length and breadth of this dear Motherland to place before you the position that faces us to-day. It is our privilege, as it is our duty, to place that position before the country and let her make the choice.

Throughout our tour we have received many addresses, but in my humble opinion no address was more truly worded than the address that

was presented to us at Kasargod. It addressed both of us as 'dear revered brothers.' I am unable to accept the second adjective 'revered.' The word 'dear' is dear to me I must confess. But dearer than that is the expression 'brothers.' The signatories to that address recognized the true significance of this travel. No blood brothers can possibly be more intimately related, can possibly be more united in one purpose, one aim than my brother Shaukat Ali and I. And I considered it a proud privilege and honour to be addressed as blood brother to Shaukat Ali. The contents of that address were as equally significant. It stated that in our united work was represented the essence of the unity between the Mussalmans and Hindus in India. If we two cannot represent that very desirable unity, if we two cannot cement the relation between the two communities, I do not know who can? Then without any rhetoric and without any flowery language the address went on to describe the inwardness of the Punjab and the Khilafat struggle; and then in simple and beautiful language it described the spiritual significance of Satyagrah and Non-co-operation. This was followed by a frank and simple promise. Although the signatories to the address realised the momentous nature of the struggle on which we have embarked, and although they sympathise with the struggle with their whole heart, they wound up by saying that even if they could not follow non-co-operation in all its details, they would do as much as they could to help the struggle. And lastly, in eloquent, and true language, they said 'if we cannot rise equal to the occasion it will not be due to want of effort but to want of ability.' I can desire no better address, no better promise, and if you, the citizens of Mangalore, can come up to the level of the signatories, and give us just the assurance that you consider the struggle to be right and that it commands your entire approval, I am certain you will make all sacrifice that lies in your power. For we are face to face with a peril greater than plagues, greater than influenza, greater than earthquakes and mighty floods, which sometimes overwhelm this land. These physical calamities can rob us of so many Indian bodies. But the calamity that has at the present moment overtaken India touches the religious honour of a fourth of her children and the self-respect of the whole nation. The Khilafat wrong affects the Mussalmans of India, and the Punjab calamity very nearly overwhelms the manhood of India. Shall we in the face of this danger be weak or rise to our full height. The remedy for both the wrongs is the spiritual solvent of non-co-operation. I call it a spiritual weapon, because it demands discipline and sacrifice from us. It demands sacrifice from every individual irrespective of the rest. And the promise that is behind this performance of duty, the promise given by every religion that

I have studied is sure and certain. It is that there is no spotless sacrifice that has been yet offered on earth, which has not carried with it its absolute adequate reward. It is a spiritual weapon, because it waits for no mandate from anybody except one's own conscience. It is a spiritual weapon, because it brings out the best in the nation and it absolutely satisfies individual honour if a single individual takes it, and it will satisfy national honour if the whole nation takes it up. And, therefore, it is that I have called non-co-operation in opposition to the opinion of many of my distinguished countrymen and leaders—a weapon that is infallible and absolutely practicable. It is infallible and practicable, because it satisfies the demands of individual conscience. God above cannot, will not expect Maulana Shaukat Ali to do more than he has been doing, for he has surrendered and placed at the disposal of God whom he believes to be the Almighty ruler of everyone, he has delivered all in the service of God. And we stand before the citizens of Mangalore and ask them to make their choice either to accept this precious gift that we lay at their feet or to reject it. And after having listened to my message if you come to the conclusion that you have no other remedy than non-co-operation for the conservation of Islam and the honour of India, you will accept that remedy. I ask you not to be confused by so many bewildering issues that are placed before you, nor to be shaken from your purpose because you see divided counsels amongst your leaders. This is one of the necessary limitations of any spiritual or any other struggle that has ever been fought on this earth. It is because it comes so suddenly that it confuses the mind if the heart is not tuned properly. And we would be perfect human beings on this earth if in all of us was found absolutely perfect correspondence between the mind and the heart. But those of you who have been following the newspaper controversy, will find that no matter what division of opinion exists amongst our journals and leaders, there is unanimity that the remedy is efficacious if it can be kept free from violence, and if it is adopted on a large scale. I admit the difficulty, the virtue however lies in surmounting it. We cannot possibly combine violence with a spiritual weapon like non-co-operation. We do not offer spotless sacrifice if we take the lives of others in offering our own. Absolute freedom from violence is, therefore, its condition precedent to non-co-operation. But I have faith in my country to know that when it has assimilated the principle of the doctrine in the fullest extent, it will respond to it. And in no case will India make any headway whatsoever until she has learnt the lesson of self-sacrifice. Even if this country were to take up the doctrine of the sword, which God forbid, it will have to learn the lesson of self-sacrifice.

The second difficulty suggested is the want of solidarity of the nation. I accept it too. But that difficulty I have already answered by saying that it is a remedy that can be taken up by individuals for individual and by the nation for national satisfaction; and therefore even if the whole nation does not take up non-co-operation, the individual successes, which may be obtained by individuals taking up non-co-operation will stand to their own credit as of the nation to which they belong.

The first stage in my humble opinion is incredibly easy inasmuch as it does not involve very great sacrifice. If your Khan bahadurs and other title-holders were to renounce their titles I venture to submit that whilst the renunciation will stand to the credit and honour of the nation, it will involve a little or no sacrifice. On the contrary, they will not only have surrendered no earthly riches but they will have gained the applause of the nation. Let us see what it means, this first step. The able editor of *Hindu*, Mr. Kastariranga Iyengar, and almost every journalist in the country are agreed that the renunciation of titles is a necessary and a desirable step. And if these chosen people of the Government were without exception to surrender their titles to Government giving notice that the heart of India is doubly wounded in that the honour of India and of muslim religion is at stake and that, therefore, they can no longer retain their titles, I venture to suggest, that this step which costs not a single penny either to them or to the nation will be an effective demonstration of the national will.

Take the second step or the second item of non-co-operation. I know there is strong opposition to the boycott of councils. The opposition when you begin to analyse it means not that the step is faulty or that it is not likely to succeed, but it is due to the belief that the whole country will not respond to it and that the Moderates will steal into the councils. I ask the citizens of Mangalore to dispel that fear from your hearts. United the voters of Mangalore can make it impossible for either a moderate or an extremist or any other form of leader to enter the councils as your representative. This step involves no sacrifice of money, no sacrifice of honour but the gaining of prestige for the whole nation. And I venture to suggest to you that this one step alone, if it is taken with any degree of unanimity even by the extremists can bring about the desired relief, but if all do not respond the individual need not be afraid. He at least will have laid the foundation for true self progress, let him have the comfort that he at least has washed his hands clean of the guilt of the Government.

Then I come to the members of the profession which one time I used to carry on. I have ventured to ask the lawyers of India to suspend their

practice and withdraw their support from a Government which no longer stands for justice, pure and unadulterated, for the nation. And the step is good for the individual lawyer who takes it and is good for the nation if all the lawyers take it.

And so for the Government and the Government aided schools, I must confess that I cannot reconcile my conscience to my children going to Government schools and to the programme of non-co-operation is intended to withdraw all support from Government, and to decline all help from it.

I will not tax your patience by taking you through the other items of non-co-operation important as they are. But I have ventured to place before you four very important and forcible steps any one of which if fully taken up contains in it possibilities of success. Swadeshi is preached as an item of non-co-operation, as a demonstration of the spirit of sacrifice, and it is an item which every man, woman and child can take up.

August 1920.

SPEECH AT BEZWADA

As I said this morning one essential condition for the progress of India is Hindu-Muslim Unity. I understand that there was a little bit of bickering between Hindus and Mussalmans to-day in Bezwada. My brother Maulana Shaukat Ali adjusted the dispute between the two communities and he illustrated in his own person the entire efficacy of one item in the first stage of Non-co-operation. He sat without any vakils appearing before him for either parties to arbitrate on the dispute between them. He required no postponement for the consideration of the question from time to time. His fees consisted in a broken lead pencil. That is what we should do, if all the lawyers suspended practice and set up arbitration for the settlement of private disputes. But why was there any quarrel at all? It is laughable in the extreme when you come to think of it. Because the Hindus seem to have played music whilst passing the mosque. I think it was improper for them to do so. Hindu-Moslem Unity does not mean that Hindus should cease to respect the prejudices and sentiments cherished by Mussalmans. And as this question of music has given rise to many a quarrel between the two communities it behoves the Hindus, if they want to cultivate true Hindu-Moslem Unity, to refrain from acts which they know injure the sentiments of their Mussalman brethren. We may not take undue advantage of the great spirit of toleration that is developing in Mussalmans and do things likely to irritate them. It is never a matter of principle for a Hindu procession to continue playing music

before mosques. And now that we desire voluntarily to respect Mussalman sentiment, we should be doubly careful at a time when Hindus are offering assistance to Mussalmans in their troubles. That assistance should be given in all humility and without any arrogation of rights. To my Mussalman brethren I would say that it would become their dignity to restrain themselves and not feel irritated when any Hindu had done anything to irritate their religious sentiment. But in any event, you have today presented to you a remedy for the settlement of any such issue. We must settle our disputes by arbitration as was done this after-noon. You cannot always get a Moulana Shaukat Ali, exercising unrivalled influence on the community. But we can always get people enough in our own villages, towns and districts who exercise influence over such villages and towns and command the confidence of both the communities. The offended party should consider it its duty to approach them and not to take the law in its own hands.

It gives me much pleasure to announce to you that, Mr. Kaleswar Rao has consented to refrain from standing for election to the new Legislative Councils. You will be also pleased to know that Mr. Gulam Nohiuddin has resigned his Honorary Magistrateship, I hope that both these patriots will not consider that they have done their last duty by their acts of renunciation, but I hope they will regard their acts as a prelude to acts of greater purpose and greater energy and I hope they will take in hand the work of educating the electorate in their districts regarding boycott of councils. I have said elsewhere that never for another century will India be faced with a conjunction of events that faces it to-day. The cloud that has descended upon Islam has solidified the Moslem world as nothing else could have. It has awakened the men and women of Mussalman India from their deep sleep. Inasmuch as a single Punjabi was made to crawl on his belly in the famous street of Amitsar, I hold that the whole of was made to crawl on its belly. And if we want to straighten up ourselves from that crawling position and stand erect before the whole world, it requires, a tremendous effort. H.E. the Viceroy in his Viceregal pronouncement at the opening of the Council was pleased to say that he did not desire to make any remarks on the Punjab events. He treated them as a closed chapter and referred us to the future verdict of history. I venture to tell you the citizens of Bezwada that India will have deserved to crawl in that lane if she accepts this pronouncement as the final answer, and if we want to stand erect before the whole world, it is impossible for a single child, man or woman in India to rest until fullest reparation has been done for the Punjab wrong. Similarly, with reference to the Khilafat

grievance the Mussalmans of India in my humble opinion will forfeit all title to consider themselves the followers of the great Prophet in whose name they recite the Kalama, day in and day out, they will forfeit their title if they do not put their shoulders to the wheel and lift this cloud that is hanging on them. But we shall make a serious blunder. India will commit suicide, if we do not understand and appreciate the forces that are arrayed against us. We have got to face a mighty Government with all its power ranged against us. This composed of men who are able, courageous, capable of making sacrifices. It is a Government which does not scruple to use means, fair or foul, in order to gain its end. No craft is above that Government. It resorts to frightfulness, terrorism. It resorts to bribery, in the shape of titles, honour and high offices. It administers opiates in the shape of Reforms. In essence then it is an autocracy double distilled in the guise of democracy. The greatest gift of a crafty cunning man are worthless so long as cunning resides in his heart. It is a Government representing a civilisation which is purely material and godless. I have given to you these qualities of this government in order not to excite your angry passions, but in order that you may appreciate the forces that are matched against you. Anger will serve no purpose. We shall have to meet ungodliness by godliness. We shall have to meet their untruth by truth; we shall have to meet their cunning and their craft by openness and simplicity; we shall have to meet their terrorism and frightfulness by bravery. And it is an unbending bravery which is demanded of every man, woman and child. We must meet their organisation by greater organising ability. We must meet their discipline by grater discipline, and we must meet their sacrifices by infinitely greater sacrifices, and if we are in a position to show these qualities in a full measure I have not the slightest doubt that we shall win this battle. If really we have fear of God in us, our prayers will give us the strength to secure victory. God has always come to the help of the helpless and we need not go before any earthly power for help.

You heard this morning of the bravery of the sword, and the bravery of suffering. For me personally, I have forever rejected the bravery of the sword. But, to-day it is not my purpose to demonstrate to you the final ineffectiveness of the sword. But he who runs may see that before India possesses itself a sword which will be more than a match for the forces of Europe, it will be generations. India may resort to the destruction of life and property here and there but such destructive cases serve no purpose. I have, therefore, presented to you a weapon called the bravery of suffering, otherwise called Non-co-operation. It is a bravery which is open to the

weakest among the weak. It is open to women and children. The power of suffering is the prerogative of nobody, and if only 300 millions of Indians could show the power of suffering in order to redress a grievous wrong done to the nation or to its religion, I make bold to say that, India will never require to draw the sword. And unless we are able to show an adequate measure of sacrifice we shall lose this battle. No one needs to tell me that India has not got this power of suffering. Every father and mother is witness to what I am about to say, viz., that every father and mother have shown in the domestic affairs matchless power of suffering. And if we have only developed national consciousness, if we have developed sufficient regard for our religion, we shall have developed power of suffering in the national and religious field. Considered in these terms the first stage in Non-co-operation is the simplest and the easiest state. If the title-holders of India consider that India is suffering from a grievous wrong both as regards the Punjab and the Khilafat, is it any suffering on their part to renounce their titles to-day? What is the measure of the suffering awaiting the lawyers who are called upon to suspend practice when compared to the great benefit which is in store for the nation? And if the parents of India will summon up courage to sacrifice secular education, they will have given their children the real education of a life-time. For they will have learnt the value of religion and national honour. And I ask you, the citizens of Bezwada, to think well before you accept the loaves and fishes in the form of Government offices set them on one side and set national honour on the other and make your service. What sacrifice is there involved in the individual renouncing his candidature for legislative councils. The councils are a tempting bait. All kinds of arguments are being advanced in favour of joining the councils. India will sacrifice the opportunity of gaining her liberty if she touches them. It passes comprehension how we, who have known this Government, who have read the Viceregal pronouncement, how we, who have known their determination not to give justice in the Punjab and the Khilafat matters, can gain any benefit by co-operation, constructive or obstructive, with this Government? But the Nationalists, belonging to a great popular party, tell us that if they do not contest these seats, the moderates will get in. Surely, it is nothing but an exhibition of want of courage and faith in our own cause to feel that we must enter the councils lest moderates should get in. Moderates believe in the possibility of obtaining justice at the hands of the Government. Nationalists have on the other hand, filled the platforms with denunciations of the Government and its measures. How can the Nationalists ever hope to gain anything by entering the

councils, holding the belief that they do? They will better represent the popular will if they wring justice from the Government by means of Non-co-operation. A calculating spirit at the present moment in the history of India will prove its ruin. I, therefore, tender my hearty congratulation to those who have announced their resignations of candidature or honorary offices, and I hope that their example will prove infectious. I have been told, and I believe it myself from what I have seen, that the Andhrus are a brave, courageous and spiritually-inclined people. I venture, therefore, to ask my Andhra brethren whether they have understood the spirituality of this beautiful doctrine of Non-co-operation. If they have, I hope they will not wait for a single moment for a mandate from the Congress or the Moslem League. They will understand that a spiritual weapon is god whether it is wielded by one or many. I, therefore, invite you to go to Calcutta with a united will and a united purpose, sanctified by a spirit of sacrifice, with a will of your own to convert those who are still undecided about the spirituality or the practicability of the weapon.

I thank you for the attention and patience with which you have listened to me. I pray to the Almighty that He may give you wisdom and courage that are so necessary at the present moment.—

August 1920.

THE CONGRESS

The largest and the most important Congress ever held has come and gone. It was the biggest demonstration ever held against the present system of Government. The President uttered the whole truth when he said that it was a Congress in which, instead of the President and the leaders driving the people, the people drove him and the latter. It was clear to every one on the platform that the people had taken the reins in their own hands. The platform would gladly have moved at a slower pace.

The Congress gave one day to a full discussion of the creed and voted solidly for it with but two dissentients after two nights' sleep over the discussion. It gave one day to a discussion of non-co-operation resolution and voted for it with unparalleled enthusiasm. It gave the last day to listening to the whole of the remaining thirty-two Articles of the Constitution which were read and translated word for word by Maulana Mahomed Ali in a loud and clear voice. It showed that it was intelligently following the reading of it, for there was dissent when Article Eight was reached. It referred to non-interference by the Congress in the internal affairs of the Native States. The Congress would not have passed the proviso if it had meant that it could even voice the feelings of the people

residing in the territories ruled by the princes. Happily the resolution suggesting the advisability of establishing responsible Government in their territories enabled me to illustrate to the audience that the proviso did not preclude the Congress from ventilating the grievances and aspirations of the subjects of these states, whilst it clearly prevented the Congress from taking any executive action in connection with them; as for instance holding a hostile demonstration in the Native States against any action of theirs. The Congress claims to dictate to the Government but it cannot do so by the very nature of its constitution in respect of the Native States.

Thus the Congress has taken three important steps after the greatest deliberation. It has expressed its determination in the clearest possible terms to attain complete null-government, if possible still in association with the British people, but even without, if necessary. It proposes to do so only by means that are honourable and non-violent. It has introduced fundamental changes in the constitution regulating its activities and has performed an act of self-denial in voluntarily restricting the number of delegates to one for every fifty thousand of the population of India and has insisted upon the delegates being the real representatives of those who want to take any part in the political life of the country. And with a view to ensuring the representation of all political parties it has accepted the principle of "single transferable vote." It has reaffirmed the non-cooperation resolution of the Special Session and amplified it in every respect. It has emphasised the necessity of non-violence and laid down that the attainment of Swaraj is conditional upon the complete harmony between the component parts of India, and has, therefore, inculcated Hindu-Muslim unity. The Hindu delegates have called upon their leaders to settle disputes between Brahmins and non-Brahmins and have urged upon the religious heads the necessity of getting rid of the poison of untouchability. The Congress has told the parents of school-going children, and the lawyers that they have not responded sufficiently to the call of the nation and that they must make greater effort in doing so. It, therefore, follows that the lawyers who do not respond quickly to the call for suspension and the parents who persist in keeping their children in Government and aided institutions must find themselves dropping out from the public life of the country. The country calls upon every man and woman in India to do their full share. But of the details of the non-cooperation resolution I must write later.

WHO IS DISLOYAL?

Mr. Montagu has discovered a new definition of disloyalty. He considers my suggestion to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales to be disloyal and some newspapers taking the cue from him have called persons who have made the suggestion 'unmannerly'. They have even attributed to these 'unmannerly' persons the suggestion of boycotting the Prince. I draw a sharp and fundamental distinction between boycotting the Prince and boycotting any welcome arranged for him. Personally, I would extend the heartiest welcome to His Royal Highness if he came or could come without official patronage and the protecting wings of the Government of the day. Being the heir to a constitutional monarch, the Prince's movements are regulated and dictated by the ministers, no matter how much the dictation may be concealed beneath diplomatically polite language. In suggesting the boycott therefore the promoters have suggested boycott of an insolent bureaucracy and dishonest ministers of his Majesty.

You cannot have it both ways. It is true that under a constitutional monarchy, the royalty is above politics. But you cannot send the Prince on a political visit for the purpose of making political capital out of him, and then complain that those who will not play your game and in order to checkmate you, proclaim boycott of the Royal visit do not know constitutional usage. For the Prince's visit is not for pleasure. His Royal Highness is to come in Mr. Lloyd George's words, as the "ambassador of the British nation," in other words, his own ambassador in order to issue a certificate of merit to him and possibly to give the ministers a new lease of life. The wish is designed to consolidate and strengthen a power that spells mischief for India. Even us it is, Mr. Montagu has foreseen, that the welcome will probably be excelled by any hitherto extended to Royalty, meaning that the people are not really and deeply affected and stirred by the official atrocities in the Punjab and the manifestly dishonest breach of official declarations on the Khilafat. With the knowledge that India was bleeding at heart, the Government of India should have told His Majesty's ministers that the moment was inopportune for sending the Prince. I venture to submit that it is adding insult to injury to bring the Prince and through his visit to steal honours and further prestige for a Government that deserves to be dismissed with disgrace. I claim that I prove my loyalty by saying that India is in no mood, is too deeply in mourning, to take part in and to welcome His Royal Highness, and that the ministers and the Indian Government show their disloyalty by making the Prince a catspaw of their deep political game. If they persist, it is the clear duty of India to have nothing to do with the visit.

CRUSADE AGAINST NON-CO-OPERATION

I have most carefully read the manifesto addressed by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and others dissuading the people from joining the non co-operation movement. I had expected to find some solid argument against non-co-operation, but to my great regret I have found in it nothing but distortion (no doubt unconscious) of the great religions and history. The manifesto says that 'non-co-operation is deprecated by the religious tenets and traditions of our motherland, nay, of all the religions that have saved and elevated the human race.' I venture to submit that the Bhagwad Gita is a gospel of non-co-operation between forces of darkness and those of light. If it is to be literally interpreted Arjun representing a just cause was enjoined to engage in bloody warfare with the unjust Kauravas. Tulsidas advises the Sant (the good) to shun the Asant (the evil-doers). The Zendavesta represents a perpetual dual between Ormuzd and Ahriman, between whom there is no compromise. To say of the Bible that it taboos non-co-operation is not to know Jesus, a Prince among passive resisters, who uncompromisingly challenged the might of the Sadducees and the Pharisees and for the sake of truth did not hesitate to divide sons from their parents. And what did the Prophet of Islam do? He non-co-operated in Mecca in a most active manner so long as his life was not in danger and wiped the dust of Mecca off his feet when he found that he and his followers might have uselessly to perish, and fled to Medina and returned when he was strong enough to give battle to his opponents. The duty of non-co-operation with unjust men and kings is as strictly enjoined by all the religions as is the duty of co-operation with just men and kings. Indeed most of the scriptures of the world seem even to go beyond non-co-operation and prefer a violence to effeminate submission to a wrong. The Hindu religious tradition of which the manifesto speaks, clearly proves the duty of non-co-operation. Prahlad dissociated himself from his father, Meerabai from her husband, Bibhishan from his brutal brother.

The manifesto speaking of the secular aspect says, 'The history of nations affords no instance to show that it (meaning non-co-operation) has, when employed, succeeded and done good.' One most recent instance of brilliant success of non-co-operation is that of General Botha who boycotted Lord Milner's reformed councils and thereby procured a perfect constitution for his country. The Dukhobours of Russia offered non-co-operation, and a handful though they were, their grievances so deeply moved the civilized world that Canada offered them a home where they

form a prosperous community. In India instances can be given by the dozen, in which in little principalities the raiyats when deeply grieved by their chiefs have cut off all connection with them and bent them to their will. I know of no instance in history where well-managed non-co-operation has failed.

Hitherto I have given historical instances of bloodless non-co-operation, I will not insult the intelligence of the reader by citing historical instances of non-co-operation combined with, violence, but I am free to confess that there are on record as many successes as failures in violent non-co-operation. And it is because I know this fact that I have placed before the country a non-violent scheme in which, if at all worked satisfactorily, success is a certainty and in which non-response means no harm. For if even one man non-co-operates, say, by resigning some office, he has gained, not lost. That is its ethical or religious aspect. For its political result naturally it requires polymerous support. I fear, therefore, no disastrous result from non-co-operation save for an outbreak of violence on the part of the people whether under provocation or otherwise. I would risk violence a thousand times than risk the emasculation of a whole race.

SPEECH AT MUZAFFARABAD

Before a crowded meeting of Mussalmans in the Muzaffarabad, Bombay, held on the 29th July, 1920, speaking on the impending non-co-operation which commenced on the 1st of August, Mr. Gandhi said: The time for speeches on non-co-operation was past and the time for practice had arrived. But two things were needful for complete success. An environment free from any violence on the part of the people and a spirit of self-sacrifice. Non-co-operation, as the speaker had conceived it, was an impossibility in an atmosphere surcharged with the spirit of violence. Violence was an exhibition of anger and any such exhibition was dissipation of valuable energy. Subduing of one's anger was a storing up of national energy, which, when set free in an ordered manner, would produce astounding results. His conception of non-co-operation did not involve rapine, plunder, incendiarism and all the concomitants of mass madness. His scheme presupposed ability on their part to control all the forces of evil. If, therefore, any disorderliness was found on the part of the people which they could not control, he for one would certainly help the Government to control them. In the presence of disorder it would be for him a choice of evil, and evil through he considered the present Government to be, he would not hesitate for the time being to help the

Government to control disorder. But he had faith in the people. He believed that they knew that the cause could only be won by non-violent methods. To put it at the lowest, the people had not the power, even if they had the will, to resist with brute strength the unjust Governments of Europe who had, in the intoxication of their success disregarding every canon of justice dealt so cruelly by the only Islamic Power in Europe.

In non-co-operation they had a matchless and powerful weapon. It was a sign of religious atrophy to sustain an unjust Government that supported an injustice by resorting to untruth and camouflage. So long, therefore, as the Government did not purge itself of the canker of injustice and untruth, it was their duty to withdraw all help from it consistently with their ability to preserve order in the social structure. The first stage of non-co-operation was, therefore, arranged so as to involve minimum of danger to public peace and minimum of sacrifice on the part of those who participated in the movement. And if they might not help an evil Government nor receive any favours from it, it followed that they must give up all titles of honour which were no longer a proud possession. Lawyers, who were in reality honorary officers of the Court, should cease to support Courts that uphold the prestige of an unjust Government and the people must be able to settle their disputes and quarrels by private arbitration. Similarly, parents should withdraw their children from the public schools and they must evolve a system of national education or private education totally independent of the Government. An insolent Government conscious of its brute strength, might laugh at such withdrawals by the people especially as the Law courts and schools were supposed to help the people, but he had not a shadow of doubt that the moral effect of such a step could not possibly be lost even upon a Government whose conscience had become stifled by the intoxication of power.

He had hesitation in accepting Swadeshi as a plank in non-co-operation. To him Swadeshi was as dear as life itself. But he had no desire to smuggle in Swadeshi through the Khilafat movement, if it could not legitimately help that movement, but conceived as non-co-operation was, in a spirit of self-sacrifice, Swadeshi had a legitimate place in the movement. Pure Swadeshi meant sacrifice of the liking for fineries. He asked the nation to sacrifice its liking for the fineries of Europe and Japan and be satisfied with the coarse but beautiful fabrics woven on their handlooms out of yarns spun by millions of their sisters. If the nation had become really awakened to a sense of the danger to its religions and its self-respect, it could not but perceive the absolute and immediate necessity

of the adoption of Swadeshi in its intense form and if the people of India adopted Swadeshi with the religious zeal he begged to assure them that its adoption would arm them with a new power and would produce an unmistakable impression throughout the whole world. He, therefore, expected the Mussalmans to give the lead by giving up all the fineries they were so fond of and adopt the simple cloth that could be produced by the manual labour of their sisters and brethren in their own cottages. And he hoped that the Hindus would follow suit. It was a sacrifice in which the whole nation, every man, woman and child could take part.

RIDICULE REPLACING REPRESSION

Had His Excellency the Viceroy not made it impossible by his defiant attitude on the Punjab and the Khilafat, I would have tendered him hearty congratulations for substituting ridicule for repression in order to kill a movement distasteful to him. For, torn from its context and read by itself His Excellency's discourse on non-co-operation is unexceptionable. It is a symptom of translation from savagery to civilization. Pouring ridicule on one's opponent is an approved method in civilised politics. And if the method is consistently continued, it will mark an important improvement upon the official barbarity of the Punjab. His interpretation of Mr. Montagu's statement about the movement is also not open to any objection whatsoever. Without doubt a government has the right to use sufficient force to put down an actual outbreak of violence.

But I regret to have to confess that this attempt to pour ridicule on the movement, read in conjunction with the sentiments on the Punjab and the Khilafat, preceding the ridicule, seems to show that His Excellency has made it a virtue of necessity. He has not finally abandoned the method of terrorism and frightfulness, but he finds the movement being conducted in such an open and truthful manner that any attempt to kill it by violent repression would not expose him not only to ridicule but contempt of all right-thinking men.

Let us, however, examine the adjectives used by His Excellency to kill the movement by laughing at it. It is 'futile,' 'ill-advised,' 'intrinsically insane,' 'unpractical,' 'visionary.' He has rounded off the adjectives by describing the movement as 'most foolish of all foolish schemes.' His Excellency has become so impatient of it that he has used all his vocabulary for showing the magnitude of the ridiculous nature of non-co-operation.

Unfortunately, for His Excellency the movement is likely to grow with ridicule as it is certain to flourish on repression. No vital movement can be killed except by the impatience, ignorance or laziness of its authors.

A movement cannot be 'insane' that is conducted by men of action as I claim the members of the Non-co-operation Committee are. It is hardly 'unpractical,' seeing that if the people respond, every one admits that it will achieve the end. At the same time it is perfectly true that if there is no response from the people, the movement will be popularly described as 'visionary.' It is for the nation to return an effective answer by organised non-co-operation and change ridicule into respect. Ridicule is like repression. Both give place to respect when they fail to produce the intended effect.

THE VICEREGAL PRONOUNCEMENT

It may be that having lost faith in His Excellency's probity and capacity to hold the high office of Viceroy of India, I now read his speeches with a biased mind, but the speech His Excellency delivered at the time of opening of the council shows to me a mental attitude which makes association with him or his Government impossible for self-respecting men.

The remarks on the Punjab mean a flat refusal to grant redress. He would have us to 'concentrate on the problems of the immediate future!' The immediate future is to compel repentance on the part of the Government on the Punjab matter. Of this there is no sign. On the contrary, His Excellency resists the temptation to reply to his critics, meaning thereby that he has not changed his opinion on the many vital matters affecting the honour of India. He is 'content to leave the issues to the verdict of history.' Now this kind of language, in my opinion, is calculated further to inflame the Indian mind. Of what use can a favourable verdict of history be to men, who have been wronged and who are still under the heels of officers who have shown themselves utterly unfit to hold offices of trust and responsibility? The plea for co-operation is, to say the least, hypocritical in the face of the determination to refuse justice to the Punjab. Can a patient who is suffering from an intolerable ache be soothed by the most tempting dishes placed before him? Will he not consider it mockery on the part of the physician who so tempted him without curing him of his pain?

His Excellency is, if possible, even less happy on the Khilafat. "So far as any Government could," says this trustee for the nation, "we pressed upon the Peace Conference the views of Indian Moslems. But notwithstanding our efforts on their behalf, we are threatened with a campaign of non-co-operation because, forsooth, the allied Powers found themselves unable to accept the contentions advanced by Indian

Moslems." This is most misleading if not untruthful. His Excellency knows that the peace terms are not the work of the allied Powers. He knows that Mr. Lloyd George is the prime author of terms and that the latter has never repudiated his responsibility for them. He has with amazing audacity justified them in spite of his considered pledge to the Moslems of India regarding Constantinople, Thrace and the rich and renowned lands of Asia minor. It is not truthful to saddle responsibility for the terms on the allied Powers when Great Britain alone has promoted them. The offence of the Viceroy becomes greater when we remember that he admits the justness of the Muslim claim. He could not have 'pressed' it if he did not admit its justice.

I venture to think that His Excellency by his pronouncement on the Punjab has strengthened the nation in its efforts to seek a remedy to compel redress of the two wrongs before it can make anything of the so-called Reforms.

FROM RIDICULE, TO—?

It will be admitted that non-co-operation has passed the stage ridicule. Whether it will now be met by repression or respect remains to be seen. Opinion has already been expressed in these columns that ridicule is an approved and civilized method of opposition. The viceregal ridicule though expressed in unnecessarily impolite terms was not open to exception.

But the testing time has now arrived. In a civilized country when ridicule fails to kill a movement it begins to command respect. Opponents meet it by respectful and cogent argument and the mutual behaviour of rival parties never becomes violent. Each party seeks to convert the other or draw the uncertain element towards its side by pure argument and reasoning.

There is little doubt now that the boycott of the councils will be extensive if it is not complete. The students have become disturbed. Important institutions may any day become truly national. Pandit Motilal Nehru's great renunciation of a legal practice which was probably second to nobody's is by itself an event calculated to change ridicule into respect. It ought to set people thinking seriously about their own attitude. There must be something very wrong about our Government—to warrant the step Pandit Motilal Nehru has taken. Post graduate students have given up their fellowships. Medical students have refused to appear for their final examination. Non-co-operation in these circumstances cannot be called an inane movement.

Either the Government must bend to the will of the people which is being expressed in no unmistakable terms through non-co-operation, or it must attempt to crush the movement by repression.

Any force used by a government under any circumstance is not repression. An open trial of a person accused of having advocated methods of violence is not repression. Every State has the right to put down or prevent violence by force. But the trial of Mr. Zafar Ali Khan and two Moulvis of Panipat shows that the Government is seeking not to put down or prevent violence but to suppress expression of opinion, to prevent the spread of disaffection. This is repression. The trials are the beginning of it. It has not still assumed a virulent form but if these trials do not result in stilling the propaganda, it is highly likely that severe repression will be resorted to by the Government.

The only other way to prevent the spread of disaffection is to remove the causes thereof. And that would be to respect the growing response of the country to the programme of non-co-operation. It is too much to expect repentance and humility from a government intoxicated with success and power.

We must, therefore, assume that the second stage in the Government programme will be repression growing in violence in the same ratio as the progress of non-co-operation. And if the movement survives repression, the day of victory of truth is near. We must then be prepared for prosecutions, punishments even up to deportations. We must evolve the capacity for going on with our programme without the leaders. That means capacity for self-government. And as no government in the world can possibly put a whole nation in prison, it must yield to its demand or abdication in favour of a government suited to that nation.

It is clear that abstention from violence and persistence in the programme are our only and surest chance of attaining our end.

The government has its choice, either to respect the movement or to try to repress it by barbarous methods. Our choice is either to succumb to repression or to continue in spite of repression.

TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA

Dear Friend,

I wish that every Englishman will see this appeal and give thoughtful attention to it.

Let me introduce myself to you. In my humble opinion, no Indian has co-operated with the British Government more than I have for an unbroken period of twenty-nine years of public life in the face of circumstances

that might well have turned any other man into a rebel. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that my co-operation was not based on the fear of the punishments provided by your laws or any other selfish motives. It was free and voluntary co-operation based on the belief that the sum total of the activity of the British Government was for the benefit of India. I put my life in peril four times for the sake of the Empire,—at the time of the Boer war when I was in charge of the Ambulance corps whose work was mentioned in General Buller's dispatches, at the time of the Zulu revolt in Natal when I was in charge of a similar corps at the time of the commencement of the late war when I raised an Ambulance corps and as a result of the strenuous training had a severe attack of pleurisy, and lastly, in fulfilment of my promise to Lord Chelmsford at the War Conference in Delhi. I threw myself in such an active recruiting campaign in Kuira District involving long and trying marches that I had an attack of dysentery which proved almost fatal. I did all this in the full belief that acts such as mine must gain for my country an equal status in the Empire. So late as last December I pleaded hard for a trustful co-operation, I fully believed that Mr. Lloyd George would redeem his promise to the Mussalmans and that the revelations of the official atrocities in the Punjab would secure full reparation for the Punjabis. But the treachery of Mr. Lloyd George and its appreciation by you, and the condonation of the Punjab atrocities have completely shattered my faith in the good intentions of the Government and the nation which is supporting it.

But though, my faith in your good intentions is gone, I recognise your bravery and I know that what you will not yield to justice and reason, you will gladly yield to bravery.

See what this Empire means to India

Exploitation of India's resources for the benefit of Great Britain.

An ever-increasing military expenditure, and a civil service the most expensive in the world.

Extravagant working of every department in utter disregard of India's poverty.

Disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole nation lest an armed nation might imperil the lives of a handful of you in our midst. Traffic in intoxicating liquors and drugs for the purposes of sustaining a top heavy administration.

Progressively representative legislation in order to suppress an evergrowing agitation seeking to give expression to a nation's agony.

Degrading treatment of Indians residing in your dominions, and

You have shown total disregard of our feelings by glorifying the

Punjab administration and flouting the Mussalman sentiment.

I know you would not mind if we could fight and wrest the sceptre from your hands. You know that we are powerless to do that, for you have ensured our incapacity to fight in open and honourable battle. Bravery on the battlefield is thus impossible for us. Bravery of the soul still remains open to us. I know you will respond to that also. I am engaged in evoking that bravery. Non-co-operation means nothing less than training in self-sacrifice. Why should we co-operate with you when we know that by your administration of this great country we are lifting daily enslaved in an increasing degree. This response of the people to my appeal is not due to my personality. I would like you to dismiss me, and for that matter the Ali Brothers too, from your consideration. My personality will fail to evoke any response to anti-Muslim cry if I were foolish enough to rise it, as the magic name of the Ali Brothers would fail to inspire the Mussalmans with enthusiasm if they were madly to raise in anti-Hindu cry. People flock in their thousands to listen to us because we to-day represent the voice of a nation groaning under iron heels. The Ali Brothers were your friends as I was, and still am. My religion forbids me to bear any ill-will towards you. I would not raise my hand against you even if I had the power. I expect to conquer you only by my suffering. The Ali Brothers will certainly draw the sword, if they could, in defence of their religion and their country. But they and I have made common cause with the people of India in their attempt to voice their feelings and to find a remedy for their distress.

You are in search of a remedy to suppress this rising ebullition of national feeling. I venture to suggest to you that the only way to suppress it is to remove the causes. You have yet the power. You can repent of the wrongs done to Indians. You can compel Mr. Lloyd George to redeem his promises. I assure you, he has kept many escape doors. You can compel the Viceroy to retire in favour of a better one, you can revise your ideas about Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. You can compel the Government to summon a conference of the recognised leaders of the people, duly elected by them and representing all shades of opinion so as to devise means for granting *Swaraj* in accordance with the wishes of the people of India. But this you cannot do unless you consider every Indian to be in reality your equal and brother. I ask for no patronage, I merely point out to you, as a friend, as honourable solution of a grave problem. The other solution, namely repression is open to you. I prophesy that it will fail. It has begun already. The Government has already imprisoned two brave men of Panipat for holding and expressing their opinions freely.

Another is on his trial in Lahore for having expressed similar opinion. One in the Oudh District is already imprisoned. Another awaits judgment. You should know what is going on in your midst. Our propaganda is being carried on in anticipation of repression. I invite you respectfully to choose the better way and make common cause with the people of India whose salt you are eating. To seek to thwart their inspirations is disloyalty to the country.

I am, Your faithful friend, M. K. GANDHI

ONE STEP ENOUGH FOR ME

Mr. Stokes is a Christian, who wants to follow the light that God gives him. He has adopted India as his home. He is watching the non-co-operation movement from the Kotgarh hills where he is living in isolation from the India of the plains and serving the hillmen. He has contributed three articles on non-co-operation to the columns of the *Servant of Calcutta* and other papers. I had the pleasure of reading them during my Bengal tour. Mr. Stokes approves of non-co-operation but dreads the consequences that may follow complete success *i.e.*, evacuation of India by the British. He conjures up before his mind a picture of India invaded by the Afghans from the North-West, plundered by the Gurkhas from the Hills. For me I say with Cardinal Newman: 'I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me.' The movement is essentially religious. The business of every god-fearing man is to dissociate himself from evil in total disregard of consequences. He must have faith in a good deed producing only a good result: that in my opinion is the Gita doctrine of work without attachment. God does not permit him to peep into the future. He follows truth although the following of it may endanger his very life. He knows that it is better to die in the way of God than to live in the way of Satan. Therefore, who ever is satisfied that this Government represents the activity of Satan has no choice left to him but to dissociate himself from it.

However, let us consider the worst that can happen to India on a sudden evacuation of India by the British. What does it matter that the Gurkhas and the Pathans attack us? Surely we would be better able to deal with their violence than we are with the continued violence, moral and physical, perpetrated by the present Government. Mr. Stokes does not seem to eschew the use of physical force. Surely the combined labour of the Rajput, the Sikh and the Mussalman warriors in a united India may be trusted to deal with plunderers from any or all the sides. Imagine,

however, the worst: Japan overwhelming us from the Bay of Bengal, the Gurkhas from the Hills, and the Pathans from the North-West. If we not succeed in driving them out we make terms with them and drive them at the first opportunity. This will be a more manly course than a hopeless submission to an admittedly wrongful State.

But I refuse to contemplate the dismal out-look. If the movement succeeds through non-violent non-co-operation, and that is the supposition Mr. Stokes has started with, the English whether they remain or retire, they will do so as friends and under a well-ordered agreement as between partners. I still believe in the goodness of human nature, whether it is English or any other. I, therefore, do not believe that the English will leave in a night.

And do I consider the Gurkha and the Afghan being incorrigible thieves and robbers without ability to respond to purifying influences? I do not. If India returns to her spirituality, it will react upon the neighbouring tribes, she will interest herself in the welfare of these hardy but poor people, and even support them if necessary, not out of fear but as a matter of neighbourly duty. She will have dealt with Japan simultaneously with the British. Japan will not want to invade India, if India has learnt to consider it a sin to use a single foreign article that she can manufacture within her own borders. She produces enough to eat and her men and women can without difficulty manufacture enough to clothe to cover their nakedness and protect themselves from heat and cold. We become prey to invasion if we excite the greed of foreign nation, by dealing with them under a feeling of dependence on them. We must learn to be independent of every one of them.

Whether, therefore, we finally succeed through violence or non-violence in my opinion, the prospect is by no means so gloomy as Mr. Stokes has imagined. Any conceivable prospect is, in my opinion, less black than the present unmanly and helpless condition. And we cannot do better than following out fearlessly and with confidence the open and honourable programme of non-violence and sacrifice that we have mapped for ourselves.

THE NEED FOR HUMILITY

The spirit of non-violence necessarily leads to humility. Non-violence means reliance on God, the Rocks of ages. If we would seek His aid, we must approach Him with a humble and a contrite heart. Non-co-operationists may not trade upon their amazing success at the Congress. We must act, even as the mango tree which drops as it bears fruit. Its

grandeur lies in its majestic lowliness. But one hears of non-co-operationists being insolent and intolerant in their behaviour towards those who differ from them. I know that they will lose all their majesty and glory, if they betray any inflation. Whilst we may not be dissatisfied with the progress made so far, we have little to our credit to make us feel proud. We have to sacrifice much more than we have done to justify pride, much less elation. Thousands, who flocked to the Congress pandal, have undoubtedly given their intellectual assent to the doctrine but few have followed it out in practice. Leaving aside the pleaders, how many parents have withdrawn their children from schools? How many of those who registered their vote in favour of non-co-operation have taken to hand-spinning or discarded the use of all foreign cloth?

Non-co-operation is not a movement of brag, bluster, or bluff. It is a test of our sincerity. It requires solid and silent self-sacrifice. It challenges our honesty and our capacity for national work. It is a movement that aims at translating ideas into action. And the more we do, the more we find that much more must be done than we have expected. And this thought of our imperfection must make us humble.

A non-co-operationist strives to compel attention and to set an example not by his violence but by his unobtrusive humility. He allows his solid action to speak for his creed. His strength lies in his reliance upon the correctness of his position. And the conviction of it grows most in his opponent when he least interposes his speech between his action and his opponent. Speech, especially when it is haughty, betrays want of confidence and it makes one's opponent sceptical about the reality of the act itself. Humility therefore is the key to quick success. I hope that every non-co-operationist will recognise the necessity of being humble and self-restrained. It is because so little is really required to be done because all of that little depends entirely upon ourselves that I have ventured the belief that Swaraj is attainable in less than one year.

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

"I write to thank you for yours of the 7th instant and especially for your request that I should after reading your writings in "Young India" on non-co-operation, give a full and frank criticism of them. I know that your sole desire is to find out the truth and to act accordingly, and hence I venture to make the following remarks. In the issue of May 5th you say that non-co-operation is "not even anti-Government." But surely to refuse to have anything to do with the Government to the extent of not serving it and of not paying its taxes is actually, if not theoretically anti-Government;

and such a course must ultimately make all Government impossible. Again, you say, "It is the inherent right of a subject to refuse to assist a government that will not listen to him." Leaving aside the question of the ethical soundness of this proposition, may I ask which Government, in the present case? Has not the Indian Government done all it possibly can in the matter? Then if its attempts to voice the request of India should fail, would it be fair and just to do anything against it? Would not the proper course be non-co-operation with the Supreme Council of the Allies, including Great Britain, if it be found that the latter has failed properly to support the demand of the Indian Government and people? It seems to me that in all your writings and speeches you forget that in the present question both Government and people are as one, and if they fail to get what they justly want, how does the question of non-co-operation arise? Hindus and Englishmen and the Government are all at present "shouldering in a full-hearted manner the burden that Mahomedans of India are carrying etc." But supposing we fail of our object—what then? Are we all to refuse to co-operate and with whom?

Might I recommend the consideration of the following course of conduct?

(1) "Wait and see" what the actual terms of the Treaty with Turkey are?

(2) If they are not in accordance with the aspirations and recommendations of the Government and the people of India, the every legitimate effort should be made to have the terms revised.

(3) To the bitter end, co-operate with a Government that co-operates with us, and only when it refuses co-operation, go in for non-co-operation.

So far, I personally see no reason whatsoever for non-co-operation with the Indian Government, and till it fails to voice the needs and demands of India as a whole there can be no reason. The Indian Government does some times make mistakes, but in the Khilafat matter it is sound and therefore deserves or ought to have the sympathetic and whole-hearted co-operation of every one in India. I hope that you will kindly consider the above and perhaps you will be able to find time for a reply in *Young India*.

I gladly make room for the above letter and respond to the suggestion to give a public reply as no doubt the difficulty experienced by the English friend is experienced by many. Causes are generally lost, not owing to the determined opposition of men who will not see the truth as they want to perpetuate an injustice but because they are able to enlist in their favour the allegiance of those who are anxious to understand a particular cause

and take sides after mature judgment. It is only by patient argument with such honest men that one is able to check oneself, correct one's own errors of judgment and at times to wean them from their error and bring them over to one's side. This Khilafat question is specially difficult because there are so many side-issues. It is therefore no wonder that many have more or less difficulty in making up their minds. It is further complicated because the painful necessity for some direct action has arisen in connection with it. But whatever the difficulty, I am convinced that there is no question so important as this one if we want harmony and peace in India.

My friend objects to my statement that non-co-operation is not anti-Government, because he considers that refusal to serve it and pay its taxes is actually anti-Government. I respectfully dissent from the view. If a brother has fundamental differences with his brother, and association with the latter involves his partaking of what in his opinion is an injustice; I hold that it is brotherly duty to refrain from serving his brother and sharing his earnings with him. This happens in everyday life. Prahalad did not act against his father when he declined to associate himself with the latter's blasphemies. Nor was Jesus anti-Jewish when he declaimed against the Pharisees and the hypocrites, and would have none of them. In such matters, is it not intention that determines the character of a particular act? It is hardly correct as the friend suggests that withdrawal of association under general circumstances would make all government impossible. But it is true that such withdrawal would make all injustice impossible.

My correspondent considers that the Government of India having done all it possibly could, non-co-operation could not be applicable to that Government. In my opinion, whilst it is true that the Government of India has done a great deal, it has not done half as much as it might have done, and might even now do. No Government can absolve itself from further action beyond protesting, when it realises that the people whom it represents feel as keenly as do lakhs of Indian Mussalmans in the Khilafat question. No amount of sympathy with a starving man can possibly avail. He must have bread or he dies, and what is wanted at that critical moment is some exertion to fetch the wherewithal to feed the dying man. The Government of India can to-day heed the agitation and ask, to the point of insistence for full vindication of the pledged word of a British Minister. Has the Government of India resigned by way of protest against the threatened, shameful betrayal of trust on the part of Mr. Lloyd George? Why does the Government of India hide itself behind secret despatches?

At a less critical moment Lord Hardinge committed a constitutional indiscretion, openly sympathised with South African Passive Resistance movement and stemmed the surging tide of public indignation in India, though at the same time he incurred the wrath of the then South African Cabinet and some public men in Great Britain. After all, the utmost that the Government of India has done is on its own showing to transmit and press the Mahomedan claim. Was that not the least it could have done? Could it have done anything less without covering itself with disgrace? What Indian Mahomedans and the Indian public expect the Government of India to do at this critical juncture is not the least, but the utmost that it could do. Viceroys have been known to tender resignations for much smaller causes. Wounded pride brought forth not very long ago the resignation of a Lieutenant Governor. On the Khilafat question, a sacred cause dear to the hearts of several million Mahomedans is in danger of being wounded. I would therefore invite the English friend, and every Englishman in India, and every Hindu, be he moderate or extremist, to make common cause with the Mahomedans and thereby compel the Government of India to do its duty, and thereby compel His Majesty's Ministers to do theirs.

There has been much talk of violence ensuing from active non-co-operation. I venture to suggest that the Mussalmans of India, if they had nothing in the shape of non-co-operation in view, would have long ago yielded to counsels of despair. I admit that non-co-operation is not unattended with danger. But violence is a certainty without, violence is only a possibility with non-co-operation. And it will be a greater possibility if all the important men, English, Hindu and others of the country discountenance it.

I think, that the recommendation made by the friend is being literally followed by the Mahomedans. Although they practically know the fate, they are waiting for the actual terms of the treaty with Turkey. They are certainly going to try every means at their disposal to have the terms revised before beginning non-co-operation. And there will certainly be no non-co-operation commenced so long as there is even hope of active co-operation on the part of the Government of India with the Mahomedans, that is, co-operation strong enough to secure a revision of the terms should they be found to be in conflict with the pledges of British statesmen. But if all these things fail, can Mahomedans as men of honour who hold their religion dearer than their lives, do anything less than wash their hands clean of the guilt of British Ministers and the Government of India by

refusing to co-operate with them? And can Hindus and Englishmen, if they value Mahomedan friendship, and if they admit the full justice of the Mahomedan friendship claim do otherwise than heartily support the Mahomedans by word and deed.

PLEDGES BROKEN

After the forgoing was printed the long-expected peace terms regarding Turkey were received. In my humble opinion they are humiliating to the Supreme Council, to the British ministers, and if as a Hindu with deep reverence for Christianity I may say so, a denial of Christ's teachings. Turkey broken down and torn with dissensions within may submit to the arrogant disposal of herself, and Indian Mahomedans may out of fear do likewise. Hindus out of fear, apathy or want of appreciation of the situation, may refuse to help their Mahomedan brethren in their hour of peril. The fact remains that a solemn promise of the Prime Minister of England has been wantonly broken. I will say nothing about President Wilson's fourteen points, for they seem now to be entirely forgotten as a day's wonder. It is a matter of deep sorrow that the Government of India *communique* offers a defence of the terms, calls them a fulfilment of Mr. Lloyd George's pledge of 5th January 1918 and yet apologises for their defective nature and appeals to the Mahomedans of India as if to mock them that they would accept the terms with quiet resignation. The mask that veils the hypocrisy is too thin to deceive anybody. It would have been dignified if the *communique* had boldly admitted Mr. Lloyd George's mistake in having made the promise referred to. As it is, the claim of fulfilment of the promise only adds to the irritation caused by its glaring breach. What is the use of the Viceroy saying, "The question of the Khilafat is one for the Mahomedans and Mahomedans only and that with their free choice in the matter, Government have no desire to interfere," while the Khalif's dominions are ruthlessly dismembered, his control of the Holy places of Islam shamelessly taken away from him and he himself reduced to utter impotence in his own palace which can no longer be called a palace but which can be more fitly described as a prison? No wonder, His Excellency fears that the peace includes "terms which must be painful to all Moslems." Why should he insult Muslim intelligence by sending the Mussalmans of India a of encouragement and sympathy? Are they expected to find encouragement in the cruel recital of the arrogant terms or in a remembrance of 'the splendid response' made by them to the call of the King 'in the day of the

Empire's need.' It ill becomes His Excellency to talk of the triumph of those ideals of justice and humanity for which the Allies fought. Indeed, the terms of the so called peace with Turkey if they are to last, will be a monument of human arrogance and man-made injustice. To attempt to crush the spirit of a brave and gallant race, because it has lost in the fortunes of war, is a triumph not of humanity but a demonstration of inhumanity. And if Turkey enjoyed the closest ties of friendship with Great Britain before the war, Great Britain has certainly made ample reparation for her mistake by having made the largest contribution to the humiliation of Turkey. It is insufferable, therefore, when the Viceroy feels confident that with the conclusion of this new treaty that friendship will quickly take life again and a Turkey regenerated full of hope and strength, will stand forth in the future as in the past a pillar of the Islamic faith. The Viceregal message audaciously concludes, "This thought will I trust strengthen you to accept the peace terms with resignation, courage and fortitude and to keep your loyalty towards the Crown bright and untarnished as it has been for so many generations." If Muslim loyalty remains untarnished it will certainly not be for want of effort on the part of the Government of India to put the heaviest strain upon it, but it will remain so because the Mahomedans realise their own strength—the strength in the knowledge that their cause is just and that they have got the power to vindicate justice in spite of the aberration suffered by Great Britain under a Prime Minister whose continued power has made as reckless in making promises as in breaking them.

Whilst, therefore, I admit that there is nothing either in the peace terms or in the Viceregal message covering them to inspire the Mahomedans and Indians in general with confidence or hope, I venture to suggest that there is no cause for despair and anger. Now is the time for Mahomedans to retain absolute self-control, to unite their forces and, weak though they are, with firm faith in God to carry on the struggle with redoubled vigour till justice is done. If India—both Hindu and Mahomedan—can act as one man and can withdraw her partnership in this crime against humanity which the peace terms represent, she will soon secure a revision of the treaty and give herself and the Empire at least, if not the world, a lasting peace. There is no doubt that the struggle would be bitter sharp and possibly prolonged, but it is worth all the sacrifice that it is likely to call forth. Both the Mussalmans and the Hindus are on their trial. Is the humiliation of the Khilafat a matter of concern to the former? And if it is, are they prepared to exercise restraint, religiously

refrain from violence and practise non-co-operation without counting the material loss it may entail upon the community? Do the Hindus honestly feel for their Mahomedan brethren to the extent of sharing their sufferings to the fullest extent? The answer to these questions and not the peace terms, will finally decide the fate of the Khilafat.

MORE OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Swadeshmitran is one of the most influential Tamil dailies of Madras. It is widely read. Everything appearing in its columns is entitled to respect. The Editor has suggested some practical difficulty in the way of non-co-operation. I would, therefore, like, to the best of my ability, to deal with them.

I do not know where the information has been derived from that I have given up the last two stages of non-co-operation. What I have said is that they are a distant goal. I abide by it. I admit that all the stages are fraught with some danger, but the last two are fraught with the greatest—the last most of all. The stages have been fixed with a view to running the least possible risk. The last two stages will not be taken up unless the committee has attained sufficient control over the people to warrant the beliefs that the laying down of arms or suspension of taxes will, humanly speaking, be free from an outbreak of violence on the part of the people. I do entertain the belief that it is possible for the people to attain the discipline necessary for taking the two steps. When once they realise that violence is totally unnecessary to bend an unwilling government to their will and that the result can be obtained with certainty by dignified non-co-operation, they will cease to think of violence even by way of retaliation. The fact is that hitherto we have not attempted to take concerted and disciplined action from the masses. Some day, if we are to become truly a self-governing nation, that attempt has to be made. The present, in my opinion, is a propitious movement. Every Indian feels the insult to the Punjab as a personal wrong, every Mussalman resents the wrong done to the Khilafat. There is, therefore, a favourable atmosphere for expecting cohesive and restrained movement on the part of the masses.

So far as response is concerned, I agree with the Editor that the quickest and the largest response is to be expected in the matter of suspension of payment of taxes, but as I have said so long as the masses are not educated to appreciate the value of non-violence even whilst their holding are being sold, so long must it be difficult to take up the last stage into any appreciable extent.

I agree too that a sudden withdrawal of the military and the police

will be a disaster if we have not acquired the ability to protect ourselves against robbers and thieves. But I suggest that when we are ready to call out the military and the police on an extensive scale we would find ourselves in a position to defend ourselves. If the police and the military resign from patriotic motives, I would certainly expect them to perform the same duty as national volunteers, not as hirelings but as willing protectors of the life and liberty of their countrymen. The movement of non-co-operation is one of automatic adjustment. If the Government schools are emptied, I would certainly expect national schools to come into being. If the lawyers as a whole suspended practice, they would devise arbitration courts and the nation will have expeditions and cheaper method of setting private disputes and awarding punishment to the wrong-doer. I may add that the Khilafat Committee is fully alive to the difficulty of the task and is taking all the necessary steps to meet the contingencies as they arise.

Regarding the leaving of civil employment, no danger is feared, because no one will leave his employment, unless he is in a position to find support for himself and family either through friends or otherwise.

Disapproval of the proposed withdrawal of students betrays, in my humble opinion, lack of appreciation of the true nature of non-co-operation. It is true enough that we pay the money wherewith our children are educated. But, when the agency imparting the education has become corrupt, we may not employ it without partaking of the agents, corruption. When students leave schools or colleges I hardly imagine that the teachers will fail to perceive the advisability of themselves resigning. But even if they do not, money can hardly be allowed to count where honour or religion are at the stake.

As to the boycott of the councils, it is not the entry of the Moderates or any other persons that matters so much as the entry of those who believe in non-co-operation. You may not co-operate at the top and non-co-operate at the bottom. A councillor cannot remain in the council and ask the *gumasta* who cleans the council-table to resign.

MR. PENNINGTON'S OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

I gladly publish Mr. Pennington's letter with its enclosure just as I have received them. Evidently Mr. Pennington is not a regular reader of 'Young India,' or he would have noticed that no one has condemned mob outrages more than I have. He seems to think that the article he has objected to was the only thing I have ever written on General Dyer. He does not seem to know that I have endeavoured with the utmost

impartiality to examine the Jallianwala massacre. And he can see any day all the proof adduced by my fellow-commissioners and myself in support of our findings on the massacre. The ordinary readers of 'Young India' knew all the facts and, therefore, it was unnecessary for me to support my assertion otherwise. But unfortunately Mr. Pennington represents the typical Englishman. He does not want to be unjust, nevertheless he is rarely just in his appreciation of world events because he has no time to study them except cursorily and that through a press whose business is to air only party views. The average Englishman, therefore, except in parochial matters is perhaps the least informed though he claims to be well-informed about every variety of interest. Mr. Pennington's ignorance is thus typical of the others and affords the best reason for securing control of our own affairs in our own hands. Ability will come with use and not by waiting to be trained by those whose natural interest is to prolong the period of tutelage as much as possible.

But to return to Mr. Pennington's letter he complains that there has been no 'proper trial of any one.' The fault is not ours. India has consistently and insistently demanded a trial of all the officers concerned in the crimes against the Punjab.

He next objects to be 'violence' of my language. If truth is violent, I plead guilty to the charge of violence of language. But I could not, without doing violence to truth, refrain from using the language, I have, regarding General Dyer's action. It has been proved out of his own mouth or hostile witnesses:

- (1) That the crowd was unarmed.
- (2) That it contained children.
- (3) That the 13th was the day of Vaisakhi fair.
- (4) That thousands had come to the fair.
- (5) That there was no rebellion.
- (6) That during the intervening two days before the 'massacre' there was peace in Amritsar.
- (7) That the proclamation of the meeting was made the same day as General Dyer's proclamation.
- (8) That General Dyer's proclamation prohibited not meetings but processions or gatherings of four men on the streets and not in private or public places.
- (9) That General Dyer ran no risk whether outside or inside the city.
- (10) That he admitted himself that many in the crowd did not know anything of his proclamation.
- (11) That he fired without warning the crowd and even after it had

begun to disperse. He fired on the backs of the people who were in flight.

(12) That the men were practically penned in an enclosure.

In the face of these admitted facts I do call the deed a 'massacre.' The action amounted not to 'an error of judgment' but its 'paralysis in the face of fancied danger.'

I am sorry to have to say that Mr. Pennington's notes, which too the reader will find published elsewhere, betray as much ignorance as his letter.

Whatever was adopted on paper in the days of Canning was certainly not translated into action in its full sense. 'Promises made to the ear were broken to the hope,' was said by a reactionary Viceroy. Military expenditure has grown enormously since the days of Canning.

The demonstration in favour of General Dyer is practically a myth.

No trace was found of the so-called Danda Fauj dignified by the name of bludgeon-army by Mr. Pennington. There was no rebel army in Amritsar. The crown that committed the horrible murders and incendiarism contained no one community exclusively. The sheet was found posted only in Lahore and not in Amritsar. Mr. Pennington should moreover have known by this time that the meeting held on the 13th was held, among other things, for the purpose of condemning mob excesses. This was brought out at the Amritsar trial. Those who surrounded him could not stop General Dyer. He says he made up his mind to shoot in a moment. He consulted nobody. When the correspondent says that the troops would have objected to being concerned in 'what might in that case be not unfairly called a 'massacre,' he writes as if he had never lived in India. I wish the Indian troops had the moral courage to refuse to shoot innocent, unarmed men in full flight. But the Indian troops have been brought in too slavish an atmosphere to dare to do any such correct act.

I hope Mr. Pennington will not accuse me again of making unverified assertions because I have not quoted from the books. The evidence is there for him to use. I can only assure him that the assertions are based on positive proofs mostly obtained from official sources.

Mr. Pennington wants me to publish an exact account of what happened on the 10th April. He can find it in the reports, and if he will patiently go through them he will discover that Sir Michael O'Dwyer and his officials goaded the people into frenzied fury—a fury which nobody, as I have already said, has condemned more than I have. The account of the following days is summed up in one word, *viz.* 'peace' on the part of the crowd disturbed by indiscriminate arrests, the massacre and the series of official crimes that followed.

I am prepared to give Mr. Pennington credit for seeking after the truth. But he has gone about it in the wrong manner. I suggest his reading the evidence before the Hunter Committee and the Congress Committee. He need not read the reports. But the evidence will convince him that I have understated the case against General Dyer.

When, however, I read his description of himself as “for 12 years Chief Magistrate of Districts in the South of India before reform, by assassination and otherwise, became so fashionable.” I despair of his being able to find the truth. An angry or a biased man renders himself incapable of finding it. And Mr. Pennington is evidently both angry and biased. What does he mean by saying, “before reform by assassination and otherwise became so fashionable?” It ill becomes him to talk of assassination when the school of assassination seems happily to have become extinct. Englishmen will never see the truth so long as they permit their vision to be blinded by arrogant assumption of superiority or ignorant assumptions of infallibility.

MR. PENNINGTON'S LETTER TO MR. GANDHI

Dear Sir,

I do not like your scheme for “boycotting” the Government of India under what seems to be the somewhat less offensive (though more cumbersome) name of non-co-operation; but have always given you credit for a genuine desire to carry out revolution by peaceful means and am astonished at the violence of the language you use in describing General Dyer on page 4 of your issue of the 14th July last. You begin by saying that he is “by no means the worst offender,” and, so far, I am inclined to agree, though as there has been no proper trial of anyone it is impossible to apportion their guilt; but then you say “his brutality is unmistakable,” “his abject and unsoldierlike cowardice is apparent, he has called an *unarmed crowd* of men and children—mostly holiday makers—a rebel army.” “He believes himself to be the saviour of the Punjab in that he was able to shoot down like rabbits men who were *penned* in an enclosure; such a man is unworthy to be considered a soldier. There was no bravery in his action. He ran no risk. He shot without the slightest opposition and without warning. This is not an error of judgement. It is paralysis of it in the face of *fancied* danger. It is proof of criminal incapacity and heartlessness,” etc.

You must excuse me for saying that all this is mere rhetoric unsupported by any proof, even where proof was possible. To begin with, neither you nor I were present at the Jallianwalla Bagh on that dreadful

day—dreadful especially for General Dyer for whom you show no sympathy, and, therefore, cannot know for certain whether the crowd was or was not unarmed. That it was an ‘illegal,’ because a ‘prohibited,’ assembly is evident; for it is absurd to suppose that General Dyer’s 4-1/2 hours march, through the city that very morning, during the whole of which he was warning the inhabitants against the danger of any sort of gathering, was not thoroughly well-known. You say they were ‘mostly holiday makers,’ but you give no proof; and the idea of holiday gathering in Amritsar just then is incredible. I cannot understand your making such a suggestion. General Dyer was not the only officer present on the occasion and it is impossible to suppose that he would have been allowed to go on shooting into an innocent body of holiday-makers. Even the troops would have refused to carry out what might then have been not unfairly called a “massacre.”

I notice that you never even allude to the frightful brutality of the mob which was immediately responsible for the punitive measure reluctantly adopted by General Dyer. Your sympathies seem to be only with the murderers, and I am not sanguine enough to suppose that my view of the case will have much influence with you. Still I am bound to do what I can to get the truth, and enclose a copy of some notes I have had occasion to make. If you can publish an *exact* account of what happened at Amritsar on the 10th of April, 1919 and the following days, especially on the 13th, including the demonstration in favour of General Dyer, (if there was one), I for one, as a mere seeker after the truth, should be very much obliged to you. Mere abuse is not convincing, as you so often observe in your generally reasonable paper,

Yours faithfully, J. R. PENNINGTON, I.O.S. (Retd.) 35, VICTORIA ROAD, WORTHING, SUSSEX 27th Aug, 1920.

For 12 years Chief Magistrate of Districts in the south of India before reform, by assassination and otherwise, became so fashionable.

P.S. Let us get the case in this way. General Dyer, acting as the only representative of Government on the spot shot, some hundreds of people (some of them *perhaps* innocently mixed up in an illegal assembly), in the *bona fide* belief that he was dealing with the remains of a very dangerous rebellion and was thereby saving the lives of very many thousands, and in the opinion of a great many people did actually save the city from falling in the hands of a dangerous mob.

SOME DOUBTS

Babu Janakdhari Prasad was a staunch co-worker with me in

Champaran. He has written a long letter setting forth his reasons for his belief that India has a great mission before her, and that she can achieve her purpose only by non-violent non-co-operation. But he has doubts which he would have me answer publicly. The letter being long, I am withholding. But the doubts are entitled to respect and I must endeavour to answer them. Here they are as framed by Bubu Janakdhari Prasad.

(a) Is not the non-co-operation movement creating a sort of race-hatred between Englishmen and Indians, and is it in accordance with the Divine plan of universal love and brotherhood?

(b) Does not the use of words "devilish," "satanic," etc., savour of unbrotherly sentiment and incite feelings of hatred?

(c) Should not the non-co-operation movement be conducted on strictly non-violent and non-emotional lines both in speech and action?

(d) Is there no danger of the movement going out of control and lending to violence?

As to (a), I must say that the movement is not 'creating' race-hatred. It certainly gives, as I have already said, disciplined expression to it. You cannot eradicate evil by ignoring it. It is because I want to promote universal brotherhood that I have taken up non-co-operation so that, by self-purification, India may make the world better than it is.

As to (b), I know that the words 'satanic' and 'devilish' are strong, but they relate the exact truth. They describe a system not persons: We are bound to hate evil, if we would shun it. But by means of non-co-operation we are able to distinguish between the evil and the evil-doer. I have found no difficulty in describing a particular activity of a brother of mine to be devilish, but I am not aware of having harboured any hatred about him. Non-co-operation teaches us to love our fellowmen in spite of their faults, not by ignoring or over-looking them.

As to (c), the movement is certainly being conducted on strictly non-violent lines. That all non-co-operators have not yet thoroughly imbibed the doctrine is true. But that just shows what an evil legacy we have inherited. Emotion there is in the movement. And it will remain. A man without emotion is a man without feeling.

As to (d), there certainly is danger of the movement becoming violent. But we may no more drop non-violent non-co-operation because of its dangers, than we may stop freedom because of the danger of its abuse.

REJOINDER

Messrs. Popley and Philips have been good enough to reply to my letter "To Every Englishman in India." I recognise and appreciate the

friendly spirit of their letter. But I see that there are fundamental differences which must for the time being divide them and me. So long as I felt that, in spite of grievous lapses the British Empire represented an activity for the worlds and India's good, I clung to it like a child to its mother's breast. But that faith is gone. The British nation has endorsed the Punjab and Khilafat crimes. There is no doubt a dissenting minority. But a dissenting minority that satisfies itself with a mere expression of its opinion and continues to help the wrong-doer partakes in wrong-doing.

And when the sum total of his energy represents a minus quantity one may not pick out the plus quantities, hold them up for admiration, and ask an admiring public to help regarding them. It is a favourite design of Satan to temper evil with a show of good and thus lure the unwary into the trap. The only way the world has known of defeating Satan is by shunning him. I invite Englishmen, who could work out the ideal believe in, to join the ranks of the non-co-operationists. W.T. Stead prayed for the reverse of the British arms during the Boer war. Miss Hobbhouse invited the Boers to keep up the fight. The betrayal of India is much worse than the injustice done to the Boers. The Boers fought and bled for their rights. When therefore, we are prepared to bleed, the right will have become embodied, and idolatrous world will perceive it and do homage to it.

But Messers. Popley and Phillips object that I have allied myself with those who would draw the sword if they could. I see nothing wrong in it. They represent the right no less than I do. And is it not worth while trying to prevent an unsheathing of the sword by helping to win the bloodless battle? Those who recognise the truth of the Indian position can only do God's work by assisting this non-violent campaign.

The second objection raised by these English friends is more to the point. I would be guilty of wrong-doing myself if the Muslim cause was not just. The fact is that the Muslim claim is not to perpetuate foreign domination of non-Muslim or Turkish races. The Indian Mussalmans do not resist self-determination, but they would fight to the last the nefarious plan of exploiting Mesopotamia under the plea of self-determination. They must resist the studied attempt to humiliate Turkey and, therefore, Islam, under the false pretext of ensuring Armenian independence.

The third objection has reference to schools. I do object to missionary or any schools being carried on with Government money. It is true that it was at one time our money. Will these good missionaries be justified in educating me with funds given to them by a robber who has robbed me of my money, religion and honour because the money was originally mine.

I personally tolerated the financial robbery of India, but it would have been a sin to have tolerated the robbery of honour through the Punjab, and of religion through Turkey. This is strong language. But nothing less would truly describe my deep conviction. Needless to add that the emptying of Government aided, or affiliated, schools does not mean starving the young mind. National Schools are coming into being as fast as the others are emptied.

Messrs. Popley and Phillips think that my sense of justice has been blurred by the knowledge of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. I hope not. I have asked friends to show me some good fruit (intended and deliberately produced) of the British occupation of India. And I assure them that I shall make the amplest amends if I find that I have erred in my eagerness about the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

TWO ENGLISHMEN REPLY

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter to every Englishman in India, with its hard-hitting and its generous tone. Something within us responds to the note which you have struck. We are not representatives of any corporate body, but we think that millions of our countrymen in England, and not a few in India, feel as we do. The reading of your letter convinces us that you and we cannot be real enemies.

May we say at once that in so far as the British Empire stands for the domination and exploitation of other races for Britain's benefit, for degrading treatment of any, for traffic in intoxicating liquors, for repressive legislation, for administration such as that which to the Amritsar incidents, we desire the end of it as much as you do? We quite understand that in the excitement of the present crisis, owing to certain acts of the British Administration, which we join with you in condemning, the Empire presents itself to you under this aspect alone. But from personal contact with our countrymen, we know that working like leaven in the midst of such tendencies, as you and we deplore, is the faith in a better ideal—the ideal of a commonwealth of free peoples voluntarily linked together by the ties of common experience in the past and common aspirations for the future, a commonwealth which may hope to spread liberty and progress through the whole earth. With vast numbers of our countrymen we value the British Empire mainly as affording the possibility of the realization of such an idea and on the ground give it our loyal allegiance.

Meanwhile we do repent of that arrogant attitude to Indians which has been all too common among our countrymen, we do hold Indians to

be our brothers and equals, many of them our superiors, and we would rather be servants than rulers of India. We desire an administration which cannot be intimidated either by the selfish element in Anglo-Indian political opinion or by any other sectional interest and which shall govern in accordance with the best democratic principles. We should welcome the convening of a National assembly of recognized leaders of the people, representing all shades of political opinion of every caste, race and creed, to frame a constitution for Swaraj. In all the things that matter most we are with you. Surely you and we can co-operate in the service of India, in such matters for example as education. It seems to us nothing short of a tragedy that you should be rallying Indian Patriotism to inaugurate a new era of goodwill under a watchword that divides, instead of uniting all.

We have spoken of the large amount of common ground upon which you and we can stand. But frankness demands that we express our anxiety about some items in your programme. Leaving aside smaller questions on which your letter seems to us to do the British side less than justice, may we mention three main points? Your insistence on spiritual forces alone we deeply respect and desire to emulate, but we cannot understand your combining into it with a close alliance with those who, as you frankly say, would draw the sword as soon as they could.

Your desire for an education truly national commands our whole-hearted approval. But instead of Indianizing the present system, as you could begin to do from the beginning of next year, or instead of creating a hundred institutions such as that at Bolpur and turning into them the stream of India's young intellectual life, you appear to be turning that stream out of its present channel into open sands where it may dry up. In other words, you seem to us to be risking the complete cessation, for a period possibly, of years, of all education, for a large number of boys and young men. Is it best, for those young men or for India that the present imperfect education should cease before a better education is ready to take its place?

Your desire to unite Mahomedan and Hindu and to share with your Mahomedan brethren in seeking the satisfaction of Mahomedan aspirations, we can understand and sympathize with. But is there no danger, in the course which some of your party have urged upon the Government, that certain races in the former Ottoman Empire might be fixed under a foreign yoke, for worse than that which you hold the English yoke to be? You could not wish to purchase freedom in India at the price of enslavement in the middle East.

To sum up, we thank you for the spirit of your letter, to which we have tried to respond in the same spirit. We are with you in the desire for an India genuinely free to develop the best that is in her and in the belief that best is something wonderful of which the world to-day stands in need.

We are ready to co-operate with you and with every other man of any race or nationality who will help India to realize her best. Are you going to insist that you can have nothing to do with us if we receive a government grant (i.e., Indian money), for an Indian School. Surely some more inspiring battle cry than non-co-operation can be discovered. We have ventured quite frankly to point out three items in your present programme, which seem to us likely to hinder the attainment of your true ideals for Indian greatness. But those ideals themselves command our warm sympathy, and we desire to work, so far as we have opportunity, for their attainment. In fact, it is only thus that we can interpret our British citizenship.

Yours sincerely, (Sd.) H.A. POPLEY, (Sd.) G.E. PHILLIPS.
Bangalore, November 15, 1920.

RENUNCIATION OF MEDALS

Mr. Gandhi has addressed the following letter to the Viceroy:—

It is not without a pang that I return the Kaisar-i-Hind gold medal granted to me by your predecessor for my humanitarian work in South Africa, the Zulu war medal granted in South Africa for my services as officer in charge of the Indian volunteer ambulance corps in 1906 and the Boer war medal for my services as assistant superintendent of the Indian volunteer stretcher bearer corps during the Boer war of 1899-1900. I venture to return these medals in pursuance of the scheme of non-co-operation inaugurated to-day in connection with the Khilafat movement. Valuable as those honours have been to me, I cannot wear them with an easy conscience so long as my Mussalman countrymen have to labour under a wrong done to their religious sentiment. Events that have happened during the past month have confirmed me in the opinion that the Imperial Government have acted in the Khilafat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral and unjust manner and have been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend their immorality. I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a Government.

The attitude of the Imperial and Your Excellency's Governments on the Punjab question has given me additional cause for grave

dissatisfaction. I had the honour, as Your Excellency is aware, as one of the congress commissioners to investigate the causes of the disorders in the Punjab during the April of 1919. And it is my deliberate conviction that Sir Michael O'Dwyer was totally unfit to hold the office of Lieutenant Governor of Punjab and that his policy was primarily responsible for infuriating the mob at Amritsar. No doubt the mob excesses were unpardonable; incendiarism, murder of five innocent Englishmen and the cowardly assault on Miss Sherwood were most deplorable and uncalled for. But the punitive measures taken by General Dyer, Col. Frank Johnson, Col. O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Shri Ram Sud, Mr. Malik Khan and other officers were out of all proportion! to the crime of the people and amounted to wanton cruelty and inhumanity and almost unparalleled in modern times. Your excellency's light-hearted treatment of the official crime, your exoneration of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Mr. Montagu's dispatch and above all the shameful ignorance of the Punjab events and callous disregard of the feelings of Indians betrayed by the House of Lords, have filled me with the gravest misgivings regarding the future of the Empire, have estranged me completely from the present Government and have disabled me from tendering, as I have hitherto whole-heartedly tendered, my loyal co-operation.

In my humble opinion the ordinary method of agitating by way of petitions, deputations and the like is no remedy for moving to repentance a Government so hopelessly indifferent to the welfare of its charges as the Government of India has proved to me. In European countries, condonation of such grievous wrongs as the Khilafat and the Punjab would have resulted in a bloody revolution by the people. They would have resisted at all costs national emasculation such as the said wrongs imply. But half of India is too weak to offer violent resistance and the other half is unwilling to do so.

I have, therefore, ventured to suggest the remedy of non-co-operation which enables those who wish, to dissociate themselves from the Government and which, if it is unattended by violence and undertaken in an ordered manner, must compel it to retrace its steps and undo the wrongs committed. But whilst I shall pursue the policy of non-co-operation in so far as I can carry the people with me, I shall not lose hope that you will yet see your way to do justice. I, therefore, respectfully ask Your Excellency to summon a conference of the recognised leaders of the people and in consultation with them find a way that would placate the Mussalmans and do reparation to the unhappy Punjab. *August 4, 1920.*

MAHATMA GANDHI'S LETTER TO H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

The following letter has been addressed by Mr. Gandhi to his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught;—

Sir,

Your Royal Highness must have heard a great deal about non-co-operation, non-co-operationists and their methods and incidentally of me its humble author. I fear that the information given to Your Royal Highness must have been in its nature one-sided. I owe it to you and to my friends and myself that I should place before you what I conceive to be the scope of non-co-operation as followed not only by me but my closest associates such as Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali.

For me it is no joy and pleasure to be actively associated in the boycott of your Royal Highness' visit—I have tendered loyal and voluntary association to the Government for an unbroken period of nearly 30 years in the full belief that through that way lay the path of freedom for my country. It was, therefore, no slight thing for me to suggest to my countrymen that we should take no part in welcoming Your Royal Highness. Not one among us has anything against you as an English gentleman. We hold your person as sacred as that of a dearest friend. I do not know any of my friends who would not guard it with his life, if he found it in danger. We are not at war with individual Englishmen we seek not to destroy English life. We do desire to destroy a system that has emasculated our country in body, mind and soul. We are determined to battle with all our might against that in the English nature which has made O'Dwyerism and Dyerism possible in the Punjab and has resulted in a wanton affront upon Islam a faith professed by seven crores of our countrymen. The affront has been put in breach of the letter and the spirit of the solemn declaration of the Prime Minister. We consider it to be inconsistent with our self respect any longer to brook the spirit of superiority and dominance which has systematically ignored and disregarded the sentiments of thirty crores of the innocent people of India on many a vital matter. It is humiliating to us, it cannot be a matter of pride to you, that thirty crores of Indians should live day in and day out in the fear of their lives from one hundred thousand Englishmen and, therefore, be under subjection to them.

Your Royal Highness has come not to end the system I have described but to sustain it by upholding its prestige. Your first pronouncement was a laudation of Lord Wellington. I have the privilege of knowing him. I believe him to be an honest and amiable gentleman who will not willingly hurt even a fly. But he has certainly failed as a ruler. He allowed himself to

be guided by those whose interest it was to support their power. He is reading the mind of the Dravidian province. Here in Bengal you are issuing a certificate of merit to a Governor who is again from all I have heard an estimable gentleman. But he knows nothing of the heart of Bengal and its yearnings. Bengal is not Calcutta. Fort William and the palaces of Calcutta represent an insolent exploitation of the unmurmuring and highly cultured peasantry of this fair province. Non-co-operationists have come to the conclusion that they must not be deceived by the reforms that tinker with the problem of India's distress and humiliation. Nor must they be impatient and angry. We must not in our impatient anger resort, to stupid violence. We freely admit that we must take our due share of the blame for the existing state. It is not so much the British guns that are responsible for our subjection, as our voluntary co-operation. Our non-participation in a hearty welcome to your Royal Highness is thus in no sense a demonstration against your high personage but it is against the system you have come to uphold. I know that individual Englishmen cannot even if they will alter the English nature all of a sudden. If we would be equals of Englishmen we must cast off fear. We must learn to be self-reliant and independent of the schools, courts, protection, and patronage of a Government, we seek to end, if it will not mend. Hence this non-violent non-co-operation. I know that we have not all yet become non-violent in speech and deed. But the results so far achieved have I assure Your Royal Highness, been amazing. The people have understood the secret and the value of non-violence as they have never done before. He who runs may see that this a religious, purifying movement. We are leaving off drink, we are trying to rid India of the curse of untouchability. We are trying to throw off foreign tinsel splendour and by reverting to the spinning wheel reviving the ancient and the poetic simplicity of life. We hope thereby to sterilize the existing harmful institution. I ask Your Royal Highness as an Englishman to study this movement and its possibilities for the Empire and the world. We are at war with nothing that is good in the world. In protecting Islam in the manner we are, we are protecting all religions. In protecting the honour of India we are protecting the honour of humanity. For our means are hurtful to none. We desire to live on terms of friendship with Englishmen but that friendship must be friendship of equals in both theory and practice. And we must continue to non-co-operate, i.e. to purify ourselves till the goal is achieved.

I ask Your Royal Highness and through you every Englishman to appreciate the view-point of the non-co-operationists.

I beg to remain, Your Royal Highness's faithful servant, (Sd.) M.K. GANDHI. *February, 1921*

THE GREATEST THING

It is to be wished that non-co-operationists will clearly recognise that nothing can stop the onward march of the nation as violence. Ireland may gain its freedom by violence. Turkey may regain her lost possessions by violence within measurable distance of time. But India cannot win her freedom by violence for a century, because her people are not built in the manner of other nations. They have been nurtured in the traditions of suffering. Rightly or wrongly, for good or ill, Islam too has evolved along peaceful lines in India. And I make bold to say that, if the honour of Islam is to be vindicated through its followers in India, it will only be by methods of peaceful, silent, dignified, conscious, and courageous suffering. The more I study that wonderful faith, the more convinced I become that the glory of Islam is due not to the sword but to the sufferings, the renunciation, and the nobility of its early Caliphs. Islam decayed when its followers, mistaking the evil for the good, dangled the sword in the face of man, and lost sight of the godliness, the humility, and austerity of its founder and his disciples. But, I am not at the present moment, concerned with showing that the basis of Islam, as of all religions, is not violence but suffering, not the taking of life but the giving of it.

What I am anxious to show is that non-co-operationists must be true as well to the spirit as to the letter of their vow if they would gain Swaraj within one year. They may forget non-co-operation but they dare not forget non-violence. Indeed, non-co-operation is non-violence. We are violent when we sustain a government whose creed is violence. It bases itself finally not on right but on might. Its last appeal is not to reason, nor the heart, but to the sword. We are tired of this creed and we have risen against it. Let us not ourselves belie our profession by being violent. Though the English are very few, they are organised for violence. Though we are many we cannot be organised for violence for a long time to come. Violence for us is a gospel of despair.

I have seen a pathetic letter from a god-fearing English woman who defends Dyerism for she thinks that, if General Dyer had not enacted Jallianwala, women and children would have been murdered by us. If we are such brutes as to desire the blood of innocent women and children, we deserve to be blotted out from the face of the earth. There is the other side. It did not strike this good lady that, if we were friends, the price that her countrymen paid at Jallianwala for buying their safety was too great. They gained their safety at the cost of their humanity. General Dyer has been haltingly blamed, and his evil genius Sir Michael O'Dwyer entirely exonerated because Englishmen do not want to leave this country of fields

even if everyone of us has to be killed. If we go mad again as we did at Amritsar, let there be no mistake that a blacker Jallianwala will be enacted.

Shall we copy Dyerism and O'Dwyerism even whilst we are condemning it? Let not our rock be violence and devilry. Our rock must be non-violence and godliness. Let us, workers, be clear as to what we are about. *Swaraj depends upon our ability to control all the forces of violence on our side.* Therefore there is no Swaraj within one year, if there is violence on the part of the people.

We must then refrain from sitting *dhurna*, we must refrain from crying 'shame, shame' to anybody, we must not use any coercion to persuade our people to adopt our way. We must guarantee to them the same freedom we claim for ourselves. We must not tamper with the masses. It is dangerous to make political use of factory labourers or the peasantry—not that we are not entitled to do so, but we are not ready for it. We have neglected their political (as distinguished from literary) education all these long years. We have not got enough honest, intelligent, reliable, and brave workers to enable us to act upon these countrymen of ours.

9. MAHATMA GANDHI'S STATEMENT

[The following is the Statement of Mahatma Gandhi made before the Court during his Trial in Ahmedabad on the 18th March 1921.]

Before reading his written statement Mahatma Gandhi spoke a few words as introductory remarks to the whole statement. He said: Before I read this statement, I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned Advocate-General's remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this Court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me. And the learned Advocate-General is also entirely in the right when he says that my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with "Young India" but that it commenced much earlier and in the statement that I am about to read it will be my painful duty to admit before this Court that it commenced much earlier than the period stated by the Advocate-General. It is the most painful duty with me but I have to discharge that duty knowing the responsibility that rested upon my shoulders. And I wish to endorse all the blame that the Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay occurrence, Madras occurrences, and the Chouri Choura occurrences thinking over

these things deeply, and sleeping over them night after night and examining my heart I have come to the conclusion that it is impossible for me to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chouri Choura or the mad outrages of Bombay. He is quite right when he says that as a man of responsibility, a man having received a fair share of education, having had a fair share of experience of this world, I should know them. I knew that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and if I was set free I would still do the same. I would be failing in my duty if I do not do so. I have felt it this morning that I would have failed in my duty if I did not say all what I said here just now. I wanted to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is the last article of my faith. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered has done an irreparable harm to my country or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad. I am deeply sorry for it; and I am, therefore, here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, Mr. Judge, is, as I am just going to say in my statement, either to resign your post or inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and law you are assisting to administer are good for the people. I do not expect that kind of conversion. But by the time I have finished with my statement you will, perhaps, have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk which a sane man can run.

WRITTEN STATEMENT

I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up that I should explain why from a staunch loyalist and co-operator I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator. To the Court too I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India. My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and as an Indian I had no rights. On the contrary I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian.

But I was not baffled. I thought that this treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticising it fully where I felt it was faulty but never wishing its destruction.

Consequently, when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it, raised a volunteer ambulance corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith. Similarly in 1906 at the time of the Zulu revolt I raised a stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the 'rebellion'. On both these occasions I received medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal. When the war broke out in 1914 between England and Germany I raised a volunteer ambulance corps in London consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students. Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly in India, when a special appeal was made at the War Conference in Delhi in 1917 by Lord Chelmsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a corps in Kheda and the response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all those efforts at service I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen.

The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and culminating in brawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations, I discovered too that the plighted word of the Prime Minister to the Mussalmans of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likely to be fulfilled. But in spite of the foreboding and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919, I fought for co-operation and working the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed and that the reforms inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India. But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was white-washed and most culprits went not only unpunished but remained in service and some continued to draw pensions from the Indian revenue, and in some cases were even rewarded. I saw too that not only did the reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him. So much

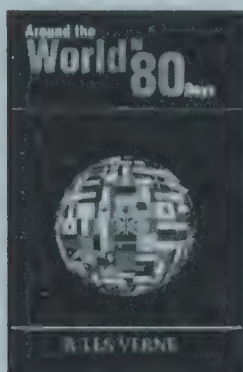
is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations before she can achieve the Dominion status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent India spun and wove in her millions of cottages just the supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources. The cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless and inhuman processes as described by English witnesses. Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of Indians are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realise that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiased, examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases had led me to believe that at least ninety-five percent. of convictions were wholly bad. My experience of political cases in India leads me to the conclusion that in nine out of every ten the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in love of their country. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Court of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do such cases. In my opinion the administration of the law is thus prostituted consciously or unconsciously for the benefit of the exploiter. The greatest misfortune is that Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many English and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world and that India is making steady though slow progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organised display of force on the one hand and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation of self-defence on the other have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This awful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124-A under which I am happily charged is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or thing, one

should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence. But the section under which mere promotion of disaffection is a crime, I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India's patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under it. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill-will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system. And it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

In fact I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing in non-co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violent implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge and the Assessors, is either to resign your posts and thus dissociate yourselves from evil if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent, or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal.

M. K. GHANDI.

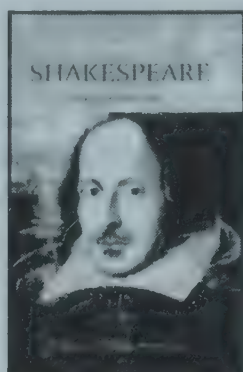
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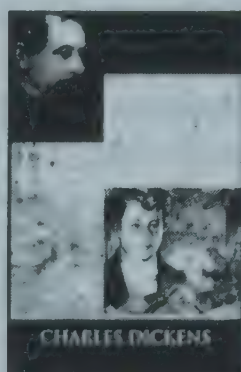
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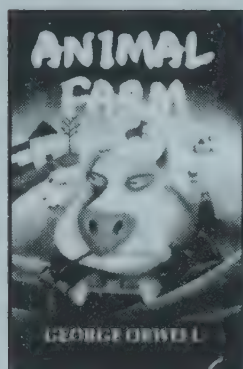
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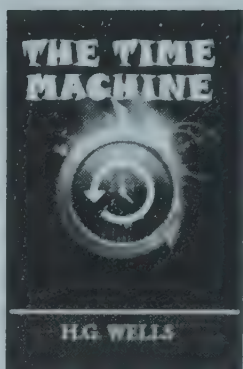
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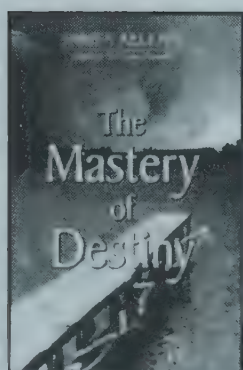
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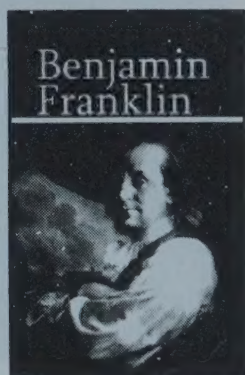


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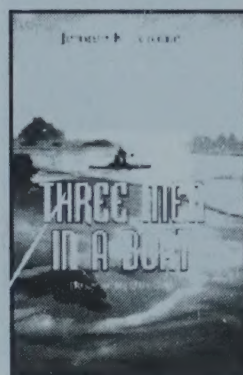
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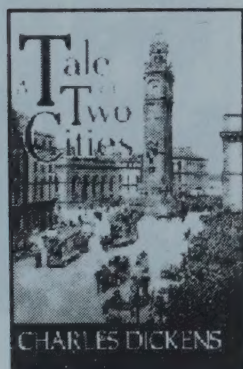
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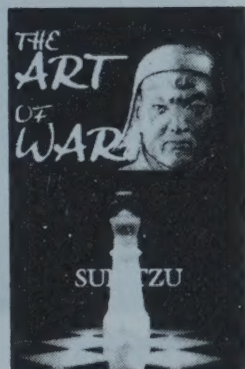
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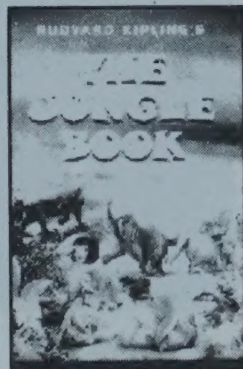
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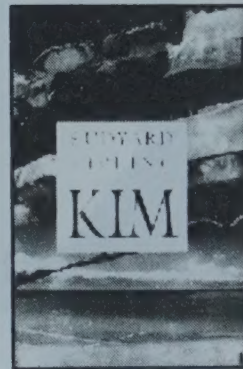
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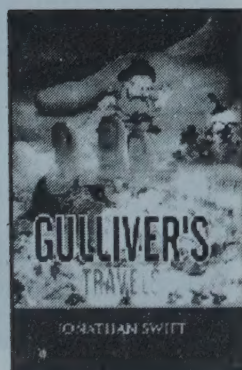
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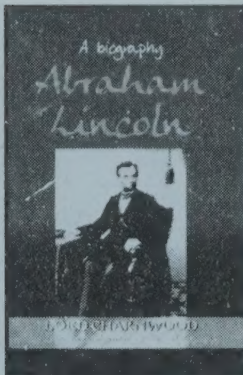


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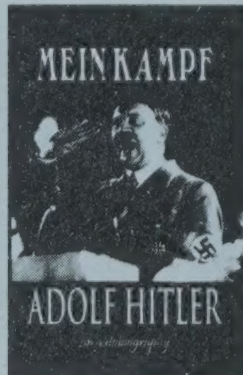


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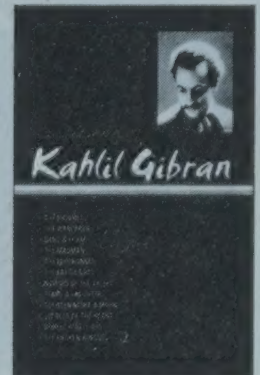
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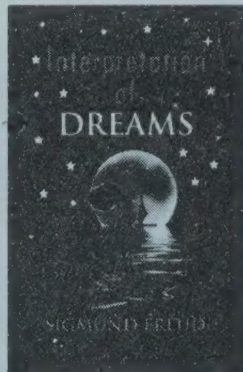
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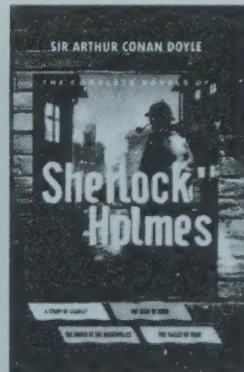
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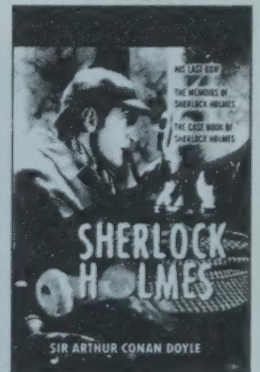
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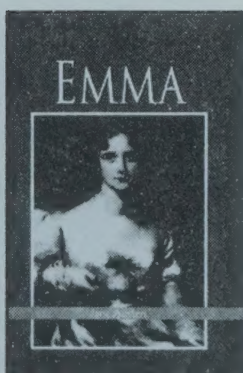
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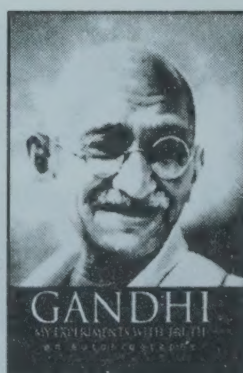
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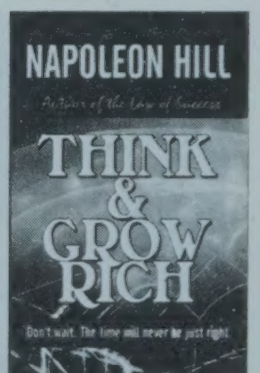
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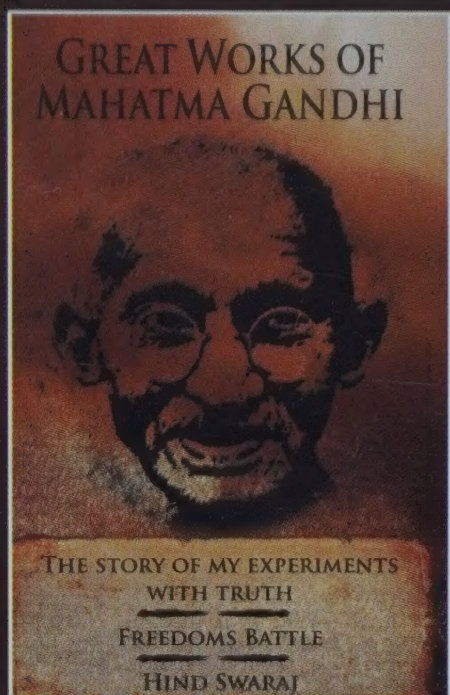


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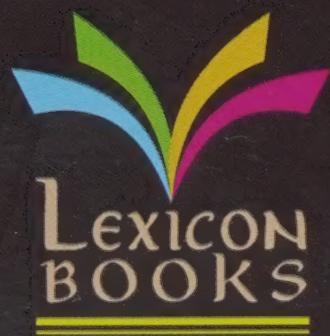


This book is a trilogy of Mahatma Gandhi's acclaimed works including his autobiographical writing The story of my experiments with truth, Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule and Freedom's battle. The collection provides an insight into the way Mahatma Gandhi spent his life, right from his childhood to his involvement into the father of the nation. The autobiography is a

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There is
No God
Higher than
Truth

-Mahatma Gandhi



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